Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

75¢

First homeowner receives home street address number. PAGE 3

4,800 disposable face masks donated to NMTI. PAGE 5

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TUESDAY AUGUST 4, 2020
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WEEKEND CLEANUP
Glenn Arriola assists Coastal Resources Management director Janice Castro as they participate in last Saturday's cleanup of the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality at Jeffrey's Beach on Saipan, where 960 lbs of trash were collected.

Story on Page 6

IVA MAURIN

WITH ONE NEW CASE

CNMI's total now at 46

One person was confirmed yesterday to have the coronavirus that causes COVID-19, bringing the CNMI's current case count to 46.

According to a statement from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and the Commonwealth Healthcare

See CNMI on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, Aug. 3, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	359	9	368
Recovered	304	1	305
Active	50	8	58
Deaths	6*	0	6*
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			22,709

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	45	1	46
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			12,301**

*Total includes a sailor from the USS *Theodore Roosevelt*.

**Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Source: Joint Information Center – Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

Alleged I-ZONE burglar is caught

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
Kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety has caught the man who allegedly robbed the I-ZONE Electronics Store over the weekend.

Cabrera

According to DPS spokesperson Dre Pangelinan, police received a tip last Saturday that the person responsible for the robbery at I-ZONE was Alvaro Joseph Cabrera. During an interview with DPS detectives, they noticed that Cabrera had an iPhone that matched the description of one that was reported stolen on the day of the incident. Cabrera later allegedly admitted to committing the robbery and was arrested at about 10:33pm and brought to the Department of Corrections where he was

The I-ZONE Electronics Store in Chalan Kanoa.
KRIZEL TUAZON

See ALLEGED on Page 4

Kilili seeking 7th term

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) filed yesterday his candidacy to seek an unprecedented seventh term as the CNMI's delegate in the U.S. House of Representatives for this Nov. 3 general elections.

Sablan

The 65-year-old Sablan may likely run unopposed at this year's midterm elections, which is now called general elections by the Commonwealth Election Commission. First elected in 2008, he became the first delegate to the U.S. from the CNMI.

See KILILI on Page 4

Torres, Palacios accompany GOP bets in filing of candidacies

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios accompanied members of the ruling Republican Party, many of them incumbents, in filing their candidacies yesterday afternoon with the Commonwealth Election Commission in Susupe for the Nov. 3 general election.

See TORRES on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Shirts and apparels from Free In Saipan carry designs inspired by the sights on Saipan.

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NATION
Like many others, working parent are struggling to balance work with their child's school work.

PAGE 12

WORLD
South Africa has surpassed 500,000 confirmed coronavirus cases.

PAGE 13

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

CITING MANDATORY QUARANTINE

IPI wants to file amended counterclaims vs contractor

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saying he underwent mandatory COVID-19 quarantine upon arriving in Vermont for a family vacation, George Hasselback, the lawyer of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, has asked the federal court to allow him to amend IPI's previous counterclaims against a former contractor.

In his declaration filed before the U.S. District Court for the NMI Friday, Hasselback said that when Pacific Rim Land Development LLC filed its notice of motion and motion to dismiss IPI's counterclaims last June 23, he was on vacation with his family in Woodbury, Vermont.

The lawyer said he previously filed an "off-island" notice with members of the CNMI Bar. At the time, Hasselback said, he was confined to his home as part of the 14-day mandatory quarantine for all persons coming into Vermont from overseas. While there, Hasselback said, his ability to communicate and work was limited, in that his home does not have cellular phone reception, and internet access at his home was limited and intermittent at that time.

Hasselback

The lawyer said that since his appearance in this case had not been entered, he was not aware that Pacific Rim filed the motion until July 3, 2020, when he was able to access the internet at his home and received an email from IPI's general counsel, Michael Dotts.

Hasselback said his intent in asking permission to amend the counterclaims is to ensure that all claims related to the contract at dispute in the case are resolved together in the most efficient and timely manner.

Pacific Rim is suing IPI and five unnamed alleged co-conspirators, saying it already substantially completed or completed the agreed-upon work on the project last Sept. 30, 2018, but has yet to be paid. IPI countersued Pacific Rim. In an amended lawsuit against Pacific Rim, Hasselback alleged, among other things, that due to the delays associated with the unworkmanlike performance of Pacific Rim, IPI lost approximately

See MANGLONA on Page 4

Saipan Cares for Animals is looking for volunteers

The non-profit organization Saipan Cares for Animals is looking for more volunteers to help out at their facility in As Gonno.

SCA director Beth Pliscou said Saipan Cares for Animals is the only facility right now that is helping animals on Saipan. "We always need volunteers because we are a non-profit organization. Volunteers keep our facility going and we always need donations, especially with dog food," she said. Saipan Cares for Animals go through 55 lbs of dog food a day.

"We have about six regular volunteers that we could count on in our facility, but we still do need a lot of volunteers. We have a lot of animals to take care of during the whole day. And it's nice to help out during the summer time until school starts," she said.

Saipan Cares for Animals is open regularly for vaccines, tick prevention, and emergencies. They are open Tuesday to Friday from 12pm to 3pm and on Saturdays from 11am to 4pm.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the facility now has a long list of spay and neuter applicants. It normally has a veterinarian that volunteers and comes to the island every month "but it is difficult to travel and have to quarantine for certain days."

Pliscou thanked the community for its continued support. For more information. you can check out their Facebook page at Saipan Cares of Animals or you can give them a call at 488-2287. ***(Chevy Alipio)***

248 EIDL worth $15.6M are approved in the NMI

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

The U.S. Small Business Administration has approved over 2.69 million economic injury disaster loans nationwide, totaling over $160 billion. In the Northern Marianas, 248 loans have been approved as of July 27, with the amount totaling $15,646,100.

» SBA also approved 476 PPP loans worth $38M

In comparison, Guam had 1,224 loans approved totaling $72,315,000; American Samoa had 132 totaling $8,622,000; Puerto Rico had 18,816 totaling $1,013,289,800; and the U.S. Virgin Islands had 1,448 totaling $81,837,400.

Small businesses all over the U.S., as well as in territories such as the CNMI, are provided the low-interest federal disaster loan through SBA, to use as working capital. Up to $2 million in economic injury disaster loan may be availed of by qualified small businesses, private nonprofit organizations, small agricultural cooperatives, and small aquaculture enterprises impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic to help with operating expenses.

Also, SBA, through its Paycheck Protection Program which helps small businesses keep their employees on the payroll, has approved over five million loans worth $519.5 billion nationwide so far. A total of 476 of this is for the CNMI, totaling $38,644,140.

Based on SBA's data, the overall average loan size is $104,000. Over $130 billion is still available under the Paycheck Protection Program. Other than payroll, this program helps small businesses pay rent, mortgage interest, or utilities.

Small businesses may apply online, or download applications at https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela to avail of this economic injury disaster loan. The deadline to apply is Dec. 21, 2020.

First homeowner receives home street address number

Yesterday marked the beginning of an important public project that would complete the Saipan street naming and numbering system, with homes and buildings on Saipan finally being numbered.

According to a statement from the Saipan Mayor's Office, the project kicked off yesterday with the first house finally getting an assigned number. This comes 22 years since streets on Saipan were first identified by names, said Mayor David M. Apatang.

The project is estimated to take at least one year for every home and building to be numbered, assuming the mayor's office street numbering division staff and its contractor, the firm of H.K. Pangelinan and Associates, LLC, find homeowners and owners of commercial and non-commercial buildings during the onsite visits.

"There will be occasions when no one would be home and our team would have to return to the site later in the day or week," said Apatang.

Yesterday, the first street address number was delivered to a resident of Koblerville, the first project area of the street numbering work. Mr. and Ms. Gerald Muna received their home's street address number from Janice Celis of the mayor's office street numbering division and Frank Camacho of H.K. Pangelinan and Associates, LLC engineering firm. The street numbering team delivered the first street address number to Mr. and Ms. Muna.

"We kindly ask the cooperation and support of the public to welcome Janice and Frank when they visit your home or commercial and non-commercial building to personally deliver your street address number," said Apatang. The success of the street naming and numbering project depends on the public accepting it. It is important today and for our future as we continue to improve how we conduct our everyday affairs and eliminate inefficiencies. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Mr. and Ms. Gerald Muna, center, shown here holding up the street address number for their house in Koblerville, pose with Frank Camacho, right, and Janice Celis, at left.

PSS expects another $23M in relief

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public School System is expecting another $23 million or more once the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate agree on a second relief package in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During a special board meeting last week, Tim Thornburgh, PSS Federal Programs manager, reported that PSS can expect equal or more than what they previously received from the U.S. Department of Education under the Education Stabilization fund from the CARES Act.

"Essentially there's going to be a second education fund program and we're looking forward to that. It's going to be a second educational stabilization fund and it would not surprise me if it would be equal or even greater than the amount of our current education stabilization fund," he said.

In the Senate's version of the relief bill, USDOE can expect around $70 billion for K-12 education and $30 billion for post-secondary education.

"Basically the senators would provide $70 billion for K-12 education and another $30 billion for post-secondary education, and then $5 billion at the governor's discretion to support. That looks very promising. We'll be following this very carefully," Thornburgh said.

Thornburgh said as of the timeline, the U.S. Senate would like to pass their version of the relief bill in the next few weeks.

"I know the Senate would like to get this passed in the next couple of weeks and we already have staff from the house and senate trying to reconcile the two bills. One is $3 trillion and the other will be at $1 trillion, there will be some give and take," he said.

However, before PSS can receive the funding, the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate must first reconcile their two relief bills.

"The HEROES Act, which was the House-passed version and now the Senate has passed their version called the HEALS Act. Basically, it's offering very large amounts but it's going to take a little while for the House and Senate to reconcile their two different bills," he said.

Fortunately, Thornburgh said, both the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate realize that support for public education is essential to reopening the economy.

"The Republican Senate has moved big time last month. After the recess, they went home, they got a real earful and they realized that if they want to go back to a full employment economy, we've got to support our public schools as well," he said.

Virtual info session about NMC ROTC program today

Northern Marianas College will be hosting a free virtual info session about the college's Reserve Officer Training Corps program on its Facebook page at 5:30pm today, Aug. 4, 2020.

Lt. Col. Thomas Anderson from the University of Guam will be presenting information about the program and will be taking questions from viewers.

The ROTC program at NMC allows for individuals to become commissioned as a military officer right out of college. Individuals who are currently enrolled or plan to enroll in the ROTC program, may be eligible for full tuition and merit-based scholarships to cover tuition and fees and an annual book allowance, or may opt to accept room and board and also receive an annual book allowance when they reach the University of Guam. Individuals who complete the four-year ROTC program will earn a bachelor's degree from UOG and become a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army.

Benefits of enrolling in the ROTC program include a higher starting base pay of $55,000 once commissioned and selected for active duty, earning a bachelor's degree in four years, multiple scholarship opportunities, and once contracted, a monthly stipend of $420 while in the program.

A non-scholarship student entering the program is not obligated to the Army until they sign a contract; however, to continue to the advanced level in the program, the student must sign a contract with the U.S. Army by your junior year.

Interested applicants can log on to facebook.com/nmc.proa this afternoon to attend the live session. A Facebook account is not required to watch the session.

For more information, email the Office of Admissions and Records at oar@marianas.edu or call 237-6770. ***(PR)***

MCS holds Kinder, 8th grade promotions

On Friday, July 31, 2020, Mount Carmel School held graduation ceremonies for its Kindergarten and Grade 8 graduates. To ensure proper safety measures were followed prior to the event, Mount Carmel administrators worked closely with the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., and the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa to keep all participants safe.

The ceremonies were originally scheduled for May earlier this year; however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, MCS postponed the ceremonies until further safety guidelines were in place. Through the collaboration of the school's Leadership Team, this effort was intended to provide its students and families with a traditional celebration.

"We are happy to finally celebrate our Kindergarten and eighth-grade graduates' promotion ceremonies," said outgoing school principal Barabara Merfalen. "We are especially grateful for the parents of our graduates for their continued patience and understanding during these uncertain times."

Among the eighth-grade students, Ruben Antonio C. Guerrero earned the valedictorian award for earning the highest grade point average. The salutatorian award for the second-highest GPA was earned by Eunkyu "Joey" Hong. Both students academically surpassed 23 other 8th-grade graduates who earned a GPA of 3.6 and higher. Due to social distancing measures and guidelines, both the baccalaureate Mass and commencement ceremony were limited to 50% capacity. Additionally, both events were limited to the graduates, immediate family members, and essential staff. To include as many family and community members, Mount Carmel School streamed the event live on its Facebook page. ***(PR)***

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economic Development Administration
SEATTLE REGIONAL OFFICE
915 Second Avenue, Room 1890
Seattle, Washington, 98174

PUBLIC NOTICE

The U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) is considering a request for Federal assistance from the CNMI Department of Finance (DOF) to construct the CNMI Economic Resiliency Center (ERC) in Capital Hill, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), EDA is conducting an assessment of the potential of the proposed project to affect the environment and/or historic properties. Notice is hereby given that the project is proposed to be located in, or may affect, a floodplain and/or wetland as defined by Executive Order (EO) 11988 and/or EO 11990.

The project is located in Capital Hill adjacent to the Department of Finance's Finance & Accounting building and the CNMI Emergency Operations Center. The Department of Finance (DOF) proposes to construct a concrete, three-story, 36,000 sq. ft., typhoon resistant structure that can withstand Category 5 typhoons and sustained winds of up to 200mph. The Economic Resiliency Center will serve as the centralized location for public financial management processes, as well as interagency data connectivity and communication networks. Additionally, the Economic Resiliency Center will serve as a location to support workforce development and training, and as a one stop location to streamline business licensing processes.

Project information is available for review at the CNMI Office of Planning & Development (OPD), Office of the Governor, CDA Building Suite 308, Oleai, Saipan, MP 96950, or by calling 670-488-1221.

If you have any information regarding potential impacts to historic properties or environmental resources including wetlands or floodplains associated with this proposed project, please provide it in writing to:

Regional Environmental Officer
Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
915 Second Avenue, Room 1890
Seattle, WA 98174
RDimmick@eda.gov

Comments received in the EDA Regional Office by 5:00 pm Eastern Standard Time on September 4, 2020 will be considered. A copy of the NEPA/NHPA decisional document will be available upon request at the above EDA Regional Office.

$7M child tax credit request with IRS

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

The Department of Finance will release the child tax credits once funds are received from the Internal Revenue Service.

Finance Secretary David Atalig stated at a radio media briefing Friday that the IRS has already received the request for child tax credits worth about $7 million, with the CNMI waiting for the IRS to finalize its review to get some funds transferred in.

"They have confirmed receipt and they are still reviewing. I hope to get a finalization of the review by Friday their time, which is tomorrow morning [Saturday CST], and hopefully we get some funds transferred in. We are prepared to release this as soon as we get the transfer from IRS," Atalig said.

According to Atalig, the first batch is usually reviewed differently than the years prior, to make sure that any new updates in the tax credit laws or regulations are in place, and that calculations are accurate.

"We are also still working on entering as much as we can all the 2019 tax refund returns, and we're compiling that data so after the child tax credits are paid out, as we do normally, we start processing a tax refund, and that is to come," he added.

The Department of Finance projects another $3 million to $4 million payout for the first round of stimulus, and uploaded about $300,000 worth of stimulus checks Wednesday last week.

"If any of our taxpayers have not received their stimulus, I do encourage you to check back if there's any issues with your tax returns, if there's any errors or verifications that needs to be done. Contact the Division of Revenue and Taxation, or email at stimulus@dof.gov.mp," Atalig advised.

Stimulus checks provide up to $1,200 for every eligible individual, $2,400 for joint returns, and $500 for every qualifying child.

For issues on stimulus checks, contact the Division of Revenue and Taxation at 664-1067, 664-1000, or 664-1019, or visit the Department of Finance office at the Joeten-Dandan Building, Monday to Friday, 7:30am to 4:30pm.

ALLEGED

From Page 1

booked and detained.

Pangelinan said DPS received a call on Friday, July 31, at about 7:38pm, from the I-ZONE Electronics Store in Chalan Kanoa, Saipan. The call was cut off mid-conversation. Officers were immediately dispatched to the scene where they learned that a robbery incident had just occurred.

A preliminary investigation revealed that the lone male suspect was dressed in a long-sleeved shirt, hat, and his face was covered with a mask. Video taken from the surveillance camera showed the suspect walking into I-ZONE with a knife and demand money from an employee. The video later circulated widely on social media in the CNMI.

The suspect then climbed over the glass counter and demanded money from the cashier, who was behind the counter. He then grabbed money from the cash register and put them in his pocket and followed the employees to the back of the store before turning around and fleeing the scene. He then headed south with a little over $1,000 in cash and two iPhones.

In an interview, I-ZONE owner Tom Gu said it seemed like the incident was premeditated.

"It happened around closing time, around 7:34pm because we close at 8pm. My worker had just left. Sshe left at around 7:20pm and he came around 7:30pm. It seemed like he was watching the store from the outside," he said.

Gu said that, for as long he and his wife have been in business, the couple never experienced a robbery like that and they never thought they would.

"This is the first time. We opened our store for more than 10 years already and we really never would think this would happen to us. You see in the news these robberies at poker rooms but we didn't expect this because our store is so close to the road and we don't close late. We never think about that," he said.

Gu said he understands that life is hard, especially considering the COVID-19 pandemic that has left many nearly destitute; however, it doesn't excuse wrongdoings against businesses who are also trying to stay afloat.

"[It's] not only us; others in the business community are scared, even members of the community. I know life is hard, but it's hard for businesses too. I understand people don't have money or jobs nowadays but it doesn't mean you can do bad things to others like stealing," he said.

Gu said he didn't recognize the robber because masks have become the new normal so they didn't think anything of it.

"We thought it was just a regular customer. My wife even tried to approach him to provide service and he just jumped inside, cracking our glass counter. I don't know if he's a regular customer because everyone wears masks. It's the new normal, so I didn't recognize him. It's hard to see," he said.

CNMI

From Page 1

Corp., the latest case is a CNMI resident and was confirmed for COVID-19 by travel screening upon arrival.

The individua is safely in quarantine and has been moved to the designated isolation area for close monitoring. Also, CHCC has already initiated contact tracing for the most immediate contacts (passengers on the same flight, close family members, friends, and associates) of the newly confirmed case.

Of the total 46 total confirmed cases, 22 cases (48%) have been identified through port-of-entry screening procedures. Nineteen cases originated from the U.S. mainland, one from a U.S. territory, and two from a foreign country.

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force statement assured that many interventions are in place to protect the community from the spread of COVID-19, as well as care for those who are diagnosed. Isolation of recent cases, identified through the CNMI Mandatory Declaration Form and COVID-19 testing required for all incoming passengers, highlights the value of this border containment effort. "Combined with immediate contact tracing, these interventions are key in minimizing the risk of exposure for COVID-19 to the community within the CNMI," the statement adds. ***(PR)***

KILILI

From Page 1

The delegate is the top seat for the coming election. Sablan handily defeated then-representative Angel Demapan of the Republican Party at the November 2018 elections.

Sablan submitted his candidacy documents before CEC executive director Julita A. Villagomez yesterday morning. He was accompanied by his wife, Andrea, mother Victorina C. Sablan, businessman Juan S. Tenorio, former governor Dr. Carlos S. Camacho, Kilili for Congress chair Dr. Galvin S. Guerrero, and some family members and supporters.

Sablan said the CNMI is in the middle of a deep crisis—trying to keep safe from the coronavirus and, at the same time, rebuilding and reopening the economy. He believes he can help by making sure the Marianas receives every possible form of aid from the federal government to stay healthy and get back to work.

Noting that he has a responsibility, Sablan said the people entrusted him with 12 years in Congress, learning how to get what the Marianas needs. "How could I walk away now, when my experience is needed more than ever? It would be wrong to do that."

Although he was re-elected as an independent in 2014, 2016, and 2018 elections, Sablan caucuses with the Democrats in Congress.

He said that, just as he has done in the past, he looks forward to working with and supporting candidates who have the best interest of the people and the communities first.

"What people care about is making sure they can take care of their family, our children are educated, and we preserve our island home," he said, adding that those are his priorities in Congress.

Sablan is chairman of the U.S. House subcommittee responsible for schools nationwide and vice chairman for Insular Affairs.

When asked about his health, Sablan said he recently lost his friend and colleague, Mike Tenorio, who was younger than he is, so it was a "wake-up call." He has quit smoking and is working to eat more healthy foods like fish, fruits, and vegetables that the islands produce in abundance. Sablan said his wife, Andrea, have started gardening to grow the healthy vegetables and fruits. He said his mother is three months away from her 90th birthday, so he prays he is blessed with the same good genes.

"But every day I remind myself that life is a gift from God, and we are expected to use our lives to do as much good as we can. For ourselves, for our family, for the people we serve," he said.

IPI

From Page 2

$89,342,352 in operations revenue at the site of IPI's casino/resort project in Garapan.

Last July 23, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona directed the court's clerk to strike or remove from the docket the amended counterclaims. Manglona said more than 21 days have passed since IPI served its answer and counterclaims against Pacific Rim and Pacific Rim served its motion to dismiss the counterclaims. Therefore, the judge said, IPI cannot amend its pleading as a matter of course. She said IPI may do so with opposing party's written consent or the court's permission.

"However, IPI did not provide written consent from Pacific Rim nor has it obtained permission to amend from the court," Manglona said.

Pacific Rim recently asked the court to dismiss IPI's counterclaims.

TORRES

From Page 1

CEC executive director Julita A. Villagomez and CEC administrative officer Kayla Igitol received the GOP's candidacy documents.

In a later interview, Torres the Republic Party's slate for the upcoming polls is a mix of incumbents and new faces. "I look forward working with them and continue the leadership that we have," he added.

With many people joining them to show their support, Torres said the Republican Party wants to continue what they have been doing to make sure that the CNMI is the safest place in the world from the coronavirus. He said the COVID-19 situation in the CNMI is being closely monitored, with a priority on people's health.

Torres credits current efforts to combat the pandemic in the CNMI for the CNMI's early success and that they need to continue that leadership to make sure that health is a priority.

At the same time, he said, they want to move forward in trying to bring tourists back and balance that out.

Torres expects GOP candidates to dominate the Nov. 3 elections once more.

"With our success with COVID-19, our people here are safer than anywhere else in the world," the governor said.

As for the GOP not fielding a candidate to challenge Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's (Ind-MP) candidacy, Torres said there is one person who is interested but, at this point, no wants to file his or her candidacy.

The deadline to submit one's candidacy is tomorrow, Wednesday.

In a separate interview, Lt. Gov. Palacios said he and Torres were at CEC to support their candidates. "We're looking forward to a successful election this coming November," Palacios said.

House Speaker Jonathan Blas T. Attao, who is seeking a fourth term as representative for Precinct 3, said they will try to fix the financial problem in the CNMI, especially the retirees' 25% pension benefits.

"We want to try to complete that out before we move to the next step. The retirees need to be secured of funds," Attao said.

The speaker said the $15 million in annual casino license fee will take care of the retirees' 25% pension.

On top of that, Attao said, they need to get the remaining three pay periods that have not been paid out to the retirees, which is April 15, April 30, and May 15.

He said they need to get those money out to make the retirees' pensions full again so they can take care of their obligations.

The speaker said this current Legislature has to finish its work first before they start thinking of moving on to the next step. "But, obviously, the problems that we face in the CNMI, we need to come out with different types of solutions and be creative in providing opportunities for our people," Attao added.

On Saipan, the GOP candidates for Precinct 1 are Rep. Joseph Leepan Tenorio Guerrero, Rep. Roman Cepeda Benavente, the governor's chief of staff Angel Aldan Demapan, acting special assistant for Youth Affairs Roy Ada, and Randall Dexter Pangelinan.

Reps. Janet U. Maratita and Luis John Castro, who ran as Republicans in 2018, are seeking reelection as independents.

Precinct 1 has six House available seats.

For Precinct 2, House floor leader Rep. John Paul P. Sablan is running with CNMI Museum director Daniel I. Aquino.

For Precinct 3, Attao and Reps. Ivan A. Blanco, Ralph N. Yumul, Jose Itibus, and Marco T. Peter are seeking reelection.

For Precinct 4, Rep. Joel Camacho is running, along with former police officer Cecilia Taitano.

For Precinct 5, vice speaker Rep. Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero is seeking reelection. Both precincts 4 and 5 have two House seats each.

Of the 20 House seats, 13 are held by Republicans and seven by independents.

For the Saipan Senate, incumbent Sen. Sixto Kaipat Igisomar is seeking reelection.

For Tinian, the GOP candidate for the House is Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission chair Patrick H. San Nicolas and Karl King Nabors for the Senate.

Tinian Republicans Rep. Antonio Borja and Sen. Francisco Borja are not seeking reelection.

On Rota, the GOP bet for the Senate is Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services Commissioner Dennis James Camacho Mendiola and Commonwealth Ports Authority board member Barrie Toves for the House.

They are running against the independent incumbents Sen. Paul A. Manglona and Rep. Donald M. Manglona.

4,800 disposable face masks donated to NMTI

Tzu Chi Foundation volunteer Masako Ono presents a donation of 4,800 disposable face masks to the Northern Marianas Trade Institution yesterday.

CHEVY ALIPIO

A non-government organization in Taiwan donated yesterday a total of 4,800 disposable face masks to the Northern Marianas Trade Institution for the upcoming school year.

Tzu Chi Foundation volunteer Masako Ono said the foundation has also donated to the Chalan Kanoa Diocese, the Public School System's Special Education program, the Maturana House of Prayer, and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

NMTI chief executive officer Agnes McPhetes said the donation "is a great blessing for us because we don't really have the money to purchase these things, and we definitely need this for our upcoming school year for our students and faculty."

"We are also working with the COVID-19 Task Force to see what help we could get from them to be prepared when we open our school," McPhetes added.

The Tzu Chi Foundation has already given protective gear in 86 countries and regions, including the CNMI, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Tzu Chi Foundation started 55 years ago in Taiwan and developed into a global NGO that has extended help to over 116 countries around the world.

"I have joined the Tzu Chi Foundation in our Japan branch office as a volunteer since I was in Japan," Ono said.

McPhetres said that NMTI's tentative date to open is on Sept. 14, 2020. "The trade school will be doing hands-on learning. We will make sure our students that apply here will get tested and instructors as well. We also have requested thermometers, so that if they come in and out of the facility, they will be checked." ***(Chevy Alipio)***

Distressed vessel off Marpi Reef

On Sunday, Aug. 2, 2020, at about 7:15pm, the CNMI Department of Public Safety received a call reporting a distressed vessel off the Marpi Reef. The caller stated that they are running low on fuel and aren't sure if they will make it to port before they run out.

At about 7:33pm, the *Impact* rescue boat was launched and headed toward the location of the distressed vessel. At approximately 8:09pm, the rescue boat arrived about four miles northwest of Banzai Cliff and escorted the vessel as it made its way toward the main channel.

At about 9pm, the vessel ran out of fuel at the entrance of the Main Channel, and was towed into port by the rescue boat. At about 9:15pm, the vessel was safely brought into the Smiling Cove Marina. The vessel was found to be in compliance with all boating safety equipment.

Police learned that the vessel ran out of fuel at Marpi reef and radioed another vessel near the area to ask if they had extra fuel. The other vessel gave them about five gallons of fuel to try to make it back toward Saipan.

DPS Boating Safety would like to remind boaters to always be aware of changing water and weather conditions. Make sure to complete a checklist of all safety equipment and inspect all safety gear before departing the marina. We encourage boaters to call into Channel 16 on your VHF radio when you need help. Or if you would like to report a distressed vessel, call 911 anytime to report a crime or an emergency. ***(PR)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

In a blink of an eye, a man stood where a boy used to be. Continue to grow more in confidence, strong in spirit and assured of our unconditional love for you. Happy 13th birthday, Iver James. Cheers to being a teenager!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
Municipality of Saipan
P.O. Box 501457 Saipan, MP 96950 • Tel: (670) 234-6208 Fax: (670) 234-1190

INVITATION TO BID
(ITB NO. 20-001)

Pursuant to 10 CMC §§ 30401 – 30415, the Saipan Bingo Act of 2017, the Honorable David M. Apatang, Mayor, Municipality of Saipan, is issuing this Notice of Invitation to Bid for the operation of a sole bingo license in the Municipality of Saipan. The term of the sole bingo license shall be for a period of five years from the date it is issued. 10 CMC § 30406 (a). No person, company, sole proprietor, joint venture, or any type of organization, including non-profit and for profit, shall submit more than one bid.

The minimum bid for the sole bingo license shall be United States Dollars $10,000.00. 10 CMC § 30409 (e). The successful bidder must pay the bid amount no later than twenty-four hours following bid award. 10 CMC § 30409 (e).

A non-refundable bid fee of USD$200.00 must accompany each bid. 10 CMC § 30409 (c). Bids received without the non-refundable bid fee shall be rejected and shall not be considered. The bid fee must be in the form of United States Currency or Bank Cashier's Check. Checks must be made payable to the "Commonwealth Treasury" and have the notation "For Deposit to Business Unit 3064A, Office of the Mayor of Saipan." Personal or business checks will not be accepted.

A bid must be submitted on a Bid Application Form. A Bid Application Form is available at the Office of the Mayor of Saipan, in the CTC Building, Suite A, 2799 Teer Drive, Oleai, Saipan. Interested bidders may pick up a form during regular government working hours, i.e., 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday – Thursday, except on government holidays. Any bid submitted on a form other than that provided by the Office of the Mayor of Saipan will be rejected and not considered.

A bid must be sealed and submitted to the Office of the Mayor of Saipan at the above-stated address, no later than 10:00 a.m. on August 11, 2020. No bids will be accepted after 10:00 a.m. on August 11, 2020. All bids will be publicly opened and announced at 10:00 a.m. on August 12, 2020, at the Office of the Mayor of Saipan, at the above-stated physical address. All dates and time indicated on this ITB are ChST.

The Office of the Mayor of Saipan reserves the right to reject any and all bids if to do so is in the best interest of the Municipality of Saipan.

A bidder must refer to Saipan Bingo Act of 2017, codified at 10 CMC §§ 30401 – 30415, for requirements to be considered a qualified or eligible bidder. A bidder must include on a separate sheet/s a description of its company and documentary proof in support of the requirements as expressly set forth in the local law. A bidder is encouraged to read the Saipan Bingo Act of 2017 before submitting a bid to ensure bidder meets the requirements of eligibility and other requirements as set out in the local law.

For information, please visit the Office of the Mayor of Saipan or call (670) 234-6208 during regular government working hours, i.e., 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday – Thursday, except on government holidays. Or email at saipanmayor@mos.gov.mp.

/s/David M. Apatang
Mayor, Municipality of Saipan

MUNICIPAL SCHOLARSHIP OFFICE

Municipality of Tinian and Augiguan
P.O. Box 520059 • San Jose Village • Tinian, MP 96952
Email: tinianscholarship@gmail.com
Tel.: (670) 433-2200 • Facsimile: (670) 433-1819

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board hereby gives notice that there will be a Special Meeting on Wednesday, August 05, 2020 at 5:00 p.m., at the Tinian Public Library, San Jose Village Tinian.

AGENDA

I. **PRELIMINARY**
   A. Call to Order
   B. Roll Call
   C. Adoption of Agenda
   D. Adoption of Minutes
      May 30, 2020
II. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
III. **NEW BUSINESS**
   A. Deadline Extension for Fall 2020
IV. **OLD BUSINESS**
V. **SCHEDULE OF NEXT BOARD MEETING**
VI. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

/S/Rodney S. Cabarles
Chairman

[1]We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments on the day of the meeting.
[2]Pursuant to 1 CMC section 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.
[3]Individuals with special needs requiring special accommodations, please contact the TMSB office at least 48 hours prior to schedule meeting for assistance.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-20-006

Archaeological Services for S19-068 Construction of Island Wide Sewerline Replacement (Lower MIHA) & W19-070 Construction of San Antonio Waterline Replacement

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from Archaeologists or firms that meet the U.S. Department of Interior qualifications (36CFR61) to create a work plan, to prepare information, data and documentation needed to conduct Section 106 Review of the National Historic Preservation Act for FY19 for the construction of a sewerline replacement in Lower MIHA & the construction of a waterline replacement in San Antonio, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval of the USEPA.

The projects have been broken down into the following detail:

S19-068 Construction of Island Wide Sewerline Replacement (Lower MIHA) – This project proposes to install approximately 700 linear feet of new 8-inch gravity sewer pipe in order to abandon an existing collapsed sewerline that was installed on private property. The project includes the installation of new manholes and the reconnection of existing sewer service laterals to the new sewer main.

W19-070 Construction of San Antonio Waterline Replacement – The project aims to upgrade and replace the existing ACP distribution main in San Antonio Village. This project will install about 2.1 miles of new 6-inch distribution main and .50 miles of 4-inch distribution main. The project will also include the replacement of all fire hydrants, gate valves, relocation and reconnection of existing service laterals, installation of new flush hydrants, air release valves, and asphalt road restoration.

The scope of Archaeological Services will include, but not be limited to:

1. Conducting the necessary research and fieldwork that represents a reasonable and good faith effort to identify historic properties, to include archaeological resources, as set out in the regulations 36 CFR § 800.4(b)(1):
   a. Background research design and work plan;
   b. Archival background information;
   c. Sample field investigation, and field survey;
   d. Past planning, research and studies;
   e. The magnitude and nature of the undertaking;
   f. The degree of federal involvement;
   g. The nature and extent of potential effects on historic properties within the APE;
   h. The likely nature, identification and location of historic properties within the APE; and,
   i. Create a mitigation plan to resolve adverse effects.

2. Preparation of the necessary reports and letters for submittal to various federal and local resource agencies to address environmental requirements of Section 106 to completely secure concurrence for the projects ready for construction.

3. Deliverables
   a. 2 copies of the final report for review and approval to HPO and CUC, and
   b. Map showing the location of identified historic properties which would assist with alignment of the new waterline and sewerline to avoid such properties.

The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one RFP package set.

One (1) original and five (5) hard copies of the PROPOSAL must be submitted in a SEALED ENVELOPE marked *"CUC-RFP-20-006: Archaeological Services For Construction of Island Wide Sewerline Replacement (Lower MIHA) & Construction of San Antonio Waterline Replacement"* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **August 14, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST).** Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposer due to lack of information or understanding of the RFP requirements in the course of proposer's preparation of the RFP under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the RFP under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on July 27, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Nicolette Villagomez, Water/Wastewater Engineer, via email address nicolette.villagomez@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said RFP, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

960 lbs of trash collected in BECQ cleanup at Jeffrey's Beach

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

More than 25 people volunteered at the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality's cleanup last Saturday at Jeffrey's Beach where 960 lbs of trash were collected.

In an interview, Toxic Waste Management manager Greg Reyes said that in a survey of the beaches on the island, Jeffrey's Beach was identified as among the beaches on island with the most trash. According to Reyes, majority of the trash collected are bottles, bottle caps, and even toothpaste that had drifted from the ocean.

"Littering is a major problem on the island. In regards to beach sites, beachgoers sometimes go to the each and they don't pick up after themselves. For that part, I highly encourage people to pick up after themselves," Reyes said. "Be more responsible. When you go to the beach, pick up after yourself. We highly encourage volunteers, and we will be publishing a press release for our next beach cleanup."

The trash is hauled away for disposal at the Marpi landfill after every cleanup. Last month, during the cleanup at Coral Ocean Point, volunteers collected 1,020 lbs of trash.

Since 1997, BECQ's Cleanup Brigade gets together with volunteers from the community every month on a Saturday to clean a pre-chosen location for just two hours, beginning at 8am. The bureau conducts and those that are identified as having the most trash gets to be selected as sites for the cleanup. The location of the monthly cleanup varies throughout the year, and will be posted on https://www.facebook.com/CNMIBECQ/.

If you want to volunteer, or for more information about volunteering, contact the BECQ office at 664-8500/1.

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality team was led by BECQ administrator Eli Cabrera in the cleanup at Jeffrey's Beach.
IVA MAURIN

BECQ staff and volunteers clean up Jeffrey's Beach.
IVA MAURIN

The collected trash is hauled to the vehicle for hauling to the Marpi landfill.
IVA MAURIN

Hauling collected trash from the beach.
IVA MAURIN

Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality 's Larry Maurin collects trash at Jeffreys Beach.
IVA MAURIN

TINIAN CLEANUP
Chief Builder Eric George, assigned to U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 3's Detail Tinian, works with residents to help clean up Unai Dankulo Beach on Tinian last July 18.
U.S. NAVY/MARCUS HENLEY

Equipment Operator Constructionman Ramsey Lora, assigned to U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 3's Detail Tinian, guides a dump truck into position after Seabees and residents filled its bed with trash while cleaning up Unai Dankulo Beach on Tinian last July 18.
U.S. NAVY/MARCUS HENLEY

APA sues Calif. corporation for non-delivery of cargo loaders

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Asia Pacific Airlines has filed a lawsuit in federal court against a corporation based in Sta. Fe Springs, California, for allegedly failing to deliver two cargo loaders and refusing to return the $144,000 that was paid as a security deposit.

Aero Micronesia Inc., which does business as Asia Pacific Airlines, is suing Mercury GSE Inc. for breach of contract, restitution-unjust enrichment, and conversion.

Asia Pacific Airlines, through counsel Steven P. Pixley, asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to issue a judgment against Mercury GSE in the amount of $144,000 representing the security deposit. Asia Pacific is also demanding punitive damages and pre- and post-judgment interests.

Asia Pacific Airlines, a corporation in Guam, with bases in Guam and Honolulu, Hawaii, is a cargo carrier and is engaged in cargo air transportation services throughout the Pacific. It also operates in the CNMI. APA is owned by THC Communications Corp., which is organized under CNMI laws.

The company it is suing, Mercury GSE Inc., is located in Sta. Fe Springs, California, and is primarily engaged in the repair, rental, and sale of aviation ground-handling equipment.

According to Pixley in the complaint filed Friday, APA had ordered two cargo loaders from Mercury GSE and wired it $158,028 on July 27, 2018, and that Mercury GSE received the funds on Aug. 3, 2018. Pixley said $144,000 of this wire transfer was designated as a deposit relating to the purchase of the two 2000 FMC Commander 15 cargo loaders. These equipment are used in the aviation industry to pack, load and unload aircraft and transfer freight and baggage between airport buildings and aircraft.

Pixley said the cargo loaders were never delivered to Asia Pacific Airlines, yet Mercury GSE Inc. has retained the deposit.

Asia Pacific Airlines had intended to use the two cargo loaders for loading aircraft engaged in business activities in the CNMI as well as other locations in the Western Pacific region.

The whole transaction began on June 25, 2018, Pixley said, when Adam Ferguson, president of Asia Pacific Airlines, met with James Spiegel, a sales representative employed by Mercury GSE Inc. and Bob Travis, chief operating officer of Mercury GSE in Torrance, California to discuss the purchase and repair of two 2000 FMC Commander 15 cargo loaders. They also discussed the repair of a used Lantis Loader Kl-206 and shipment of this cargo loader from the Seattle airport to Mercury GSE Inc.'s Santa Fe Springs facility.

Pixley

On July 24, 2018, Spiegel reportedly emailed Ferguson to sell the two "fully services, repaired and painted" cargo loaders for $165,000 each. Two days later, Spiegel allegedly sent another email to Ferguson lowering the price of each equipment to $160,000.

Pixley said Spiegel further represented that "this work will start after the beginning of September once we have completed the move. We estimate the lead time of 8-10 weeks for the completion of both units. We are requiring a 45% deposit to start work on all orders placed…" This email, Pixley said, also discussed the costs of rebuilding the Lantis Loader KL-206.

Relying on this, Asia Pacific Airlines wired $158,028 from its Bank of Guam account to Mercury GSE's account in Hawthorne, California, on July 27, 2018. Pixley said that $144,000 of this wire transfer was identified as a security deposit for the two cargo loaders. The remaining $14,028 was payment for shipping costs for the Lantis Loader KL-206 from Seattle airport to Mercury GSE Inc. Pixley said the funds were received by Mercury GSE on Aug. 3, 2018.

Pixley said that, on Oct. 22, 2018, Mercury GSE's CEO Bob Travis sent an email to Ferguson stating that they were "experiencing delays in getting our shop operating at full capacity due to our move."

Pixley said Travis further stated that he did "not anticipate Mercury GSE Inc. being able to start work on the Commanders or your Lantis before Q1 of 2019."

On May 20, 2019, Ferguson allegedly spoke with Travis regarding the status of the two 2000 FMC Commander 15 cargo loaders. Following this telephone conversation, Pixley said, Ferguson sent an email to Travis stating that no work had been done on the two cargo loaders.

Pixley said upon information and belief the two cargo loaders had been sold to a third party.

On May 22, 2019, Ferguson sent an email demanding the return of Asia Pacific Airlines' $144,000 deposit.

Since May 22, 2019, Pixley said, the parties have attempted to resolve this matter but Mercury GSE has failed to return the deposit, insisting that no enforceable contract existed between the parties.

As a result of Mercury GSE's breach of its contract with Asia Pacific Airlines, Mercury GSE is liable to Asia Pacific Airlines for all damages resulting from its breach of contract in an amount to be proven at trial plus pre-judgment and post-judgment interest, Pixley said, adding that Mercury GSE has been unjustly enriched through the retention of the $144,000 security deposit at the expense of Asia Pacific Airlines.

APA, like *Saipan Tribune*, is an affiliate company of TanHoldings.

House numbering project to start in Koblerville

The Saipan Mayor's Office is working on getting the house numbering project off the ground starting in Koblerville.

"Starting Monday we are going to start giving homeowners and commercial and noncommercial building owners their address numbers. We will start in the Koblerville village," said Henry Hofschneider, Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang's chief of staff.

The mayor's office's contract with HK Pangelinan and Associates LLC suggests they would start at Koblerville because of the subdivision in the area that is well organized and used to be a homestead subdivision.

"We will be giving homeowners a letter that gives them their street address and number of sample [images] that show them how to put [the numbers] on their houses or commercial buildings," Hofschneider said.

The house numbers will be at a minimum height of 5.5 feet to 5.6 feet from the floor. The font size will be 4 inches to 9 inches.

"This is for the benefit for our community. It is also for our 911 system and emergencies to quickly know if anything happens. This may also be an opportunity to establish a door-to-door mail delivery on Saipan," said Apatang.

Once the system is in place, firefighters, paramedics, and police will be able to locate a certain home or building immediately, and could possibly save someone's life, Hofschneider added.

The start date would be on Aug. 3, 2020, and may have an estimated completion time of next year. They hope to assign numbers to about 180-250 homes. ***(Chevy Alipio)***

UOG launches free online service for caregivers of persons with dementia

Starting this week, caregivers of persons with dementia will have a regular lifeline to peer support as well as health care professionals and others with dementia expertise.

As part of its Telehealth Geriatric Support Services, the Isa Psychological Services Center at the University of Guam will be hosting online caregiver support groups four times per month. The service is in collaboration with the UOG School of Health's Guam/Micronesia Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program.

Open free of charge to partners, family members, and other caregivers of persons with dementia, the support groups will provide a safe place to share the stresses and challenges, successes and rewards of caring for a loved one with dementia with others who may be going through similar experiences. The groups will also provide a forum for caregivers to participate in presentations led by health care professionals and other community members with expertise in caring for persons with dementia.

The support groups will be facilitated by Isa Psychological Services Center counselors Annie Fay Camacho and Nikolas Gutierrez, who each hold bachelor's degrees in psychology; Health Services of the Pacific social worker Rhoda Orallo, who holds a master's in social work; and clinical psychologist Dr. Iain Twaddle of the Isa Psychological Services Center.

The support groups will be conducted remotely via phone, text, and video sessions during the pandemic.

Sessions will be held year-round starting on tomorrow, Aug. 5, at the following times:

- 6pm to 8pm on the first and third Wednesdays of each month;
- 10am to noon on the first and third Saturdays of each month.

Participation in the support groups is client-centered and confidential.

To sign up for an online caregiver support group, call or email Annie Fay Camacho at (671) 735-2883 or isa@triton.uog.edu or Rhoda Orallo at (671) 735-3277 or nfcspmgr@teleguam.net. ***(PR)***

VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING

On July 30, some 90 educators and education policymakers, including school administrators, participated in the first-ever Public School System Virtual Leadership Training that was moderated and hosted by, from left, Dr. Bobby Cruz, Lorraine Catienza, Jonathan Aguon, and Le'ah Murphy. The training was in line with plans to ensure a safe and smooth Sept. 8 reopening of classes in the Commonwealth. PSS is implementing a hybrid approach when it opens the new school year, which is a combination of remote and face-to-face instruction. **PSS**

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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Phone: (670) 237-6500 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 02-2020

Opening date: July 22, 2020 **Closing date: August 11, 2020**

Positions: (1) Radio Operator/Weather Observer (Rota)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the ***CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport***. Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than **5:00 P.M. on Tuesday, August 11, 2020**.

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions shall be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.tenorio@cpa.gov.mp or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB20-JUDICIARY-099

SUBMISSION DATE: AUGUST 13, 2020 TIME: 09:00 A.M.

"TILING PURCHASE AND TILING SERVICES FOR THE GUMA' HUSTISIA. A PROJECT UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****MUST USE A FACE MASK BEFORE ENTERING THE OFFICE****

A **MANDATORY PRE-BID MEETING IS** SCHEDULED FOR **10:00 A.M., LOCAL TIME, AUGUST 05, 2020** AT THE GUMA' HUSTISIA ASSEMBLY HALL.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB SHALL BE DIRECTED TO **MR. GERALD WEAVER, BUILDING SUPERINTENDENT,** VIA EMAIL TO **gerald.weaver@nmijudiciary.com** ON OR BEFORE **THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, AUGUST 06, 2020**. ALL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SHALL BE SHARED WITH ALL BIDDERS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ DAVID DLG. ATALIG
SECRETARY OF FINANCE

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

/S/ ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
CHIEF JUSTICE

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Life on Mars? The science-affirming mission we need right now

From writer H.G. Wells to filmmaker Ridley Scott, the possibility of life on Mars has long sparked the public's imagination for generations. And if there ever was a time when a world could use a demonstration of the power of science, or at least a hopeful distraction, it is in the Year of Oh-My-Lord 2020.

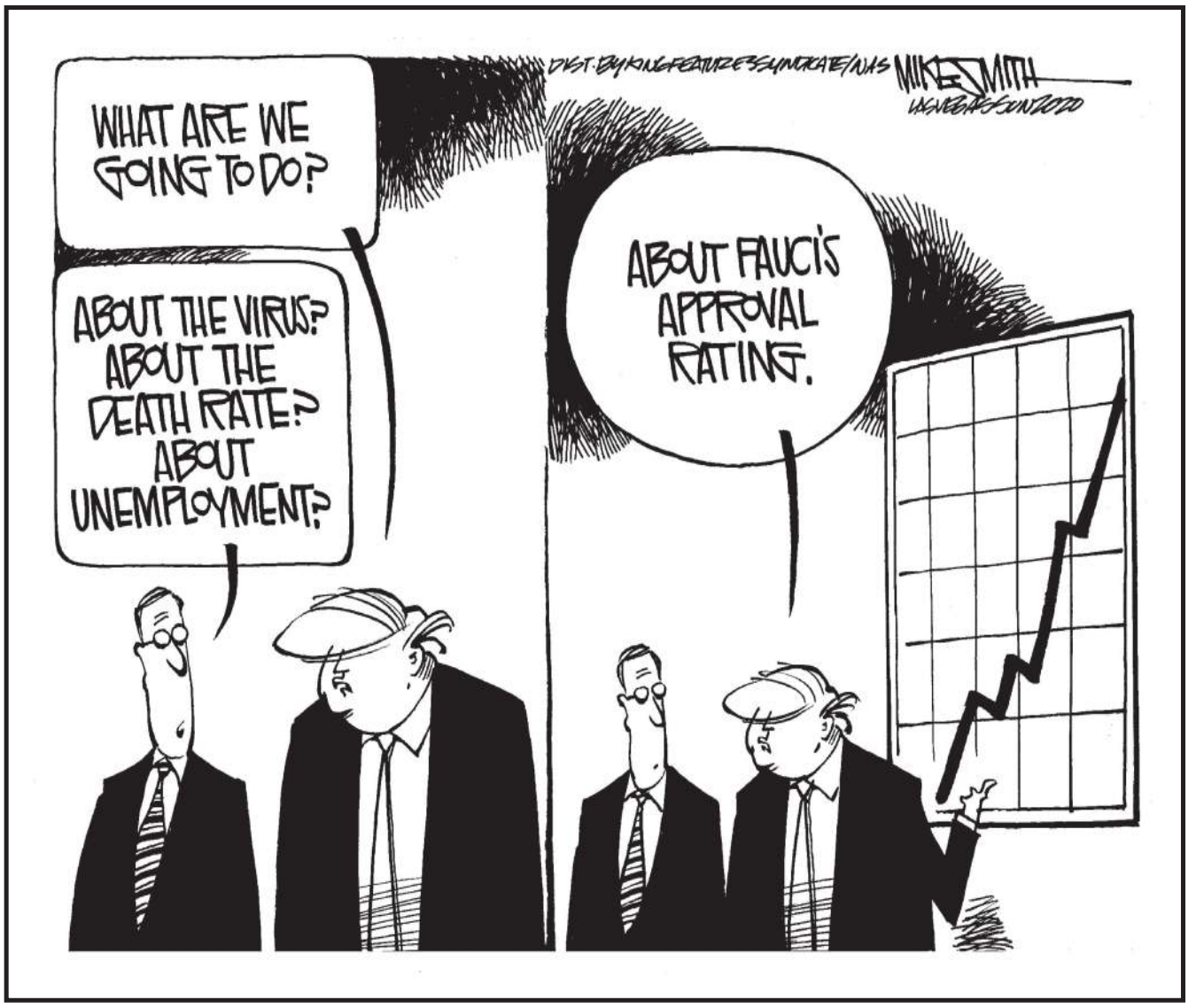
Earth is caught not only in a raging COVID-19 pandemic but in an extraordinary rejection of the systemic study of the natural world. When a sitting member of Congress who openly defies social distancing norms contracts the virus and then blames mask-wearing for his fate, as Texas Republican Rep. Louie Gohmert did, while a sitting president promotes videos of a woman who believes the coronavirus has already been cured (and warns about having sex with demons), as Donald Trump did, then maybe it's time everyone got back in the classroom for some remedial instruction. Perhaps a NASA mission is just what the doctor ordered.

Certainly, Thursday's launch was not as dramatic as aliens landing in New Jersey bent on destroying mankind or astronaut Mark Watney getting stuck on the red planet in the movie "The Martian" and forced to MacGyver his survival, or even the antennae rising from the back of Uncle Martin's head in "My Favorite Martian." But at least the Perseverance rover now headed to Mars is real and not fictional. Its mission is to closely examine the rocks and soil beginning with the Jezero Crater while the companion drone helicopter Ingenuity hovers 15 feet above the surface to check out the challenges of the Martian flight.

It's entirely possible Perseverance will uncover signs of ancient microbial life on Mars as it roams the planet. It's not the first such U.S.-led effort (four others, Curiosity, Opportunity, Spirit, and the original Mars rover, Sojourner, came before it) but it's the most capable with the ability to drill and store core samples and ramble across the landscape for the equivalent of two earth years.

It's a shame that now comes the boring part. Perseverance won't land until February. In movies, this is usually the moment where there's a montage of rocket hurtling clips interspersed with scenes of NASA personnel hunched over computers before a landing takes place about 30 seconds later. Still, this gives everyone time to marvel at how human ingenuity and knowledge has reached the point where a remotely controlled robot stuffed with all kinds of technology from lasers to drills, cameras and microphones, sitting on top of a powerful Atlas V rocket can be launched into space with the press of a button on a mission that will take years to complete.

See MARS on Next Page


WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?
ABOUT THE VIRUS? ABOUT THE DEATH RATE? ABOUT UNEMPLOYMENT?
ABOUT FAUCI'S APPROVAL RATING.
DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE/NAS
MIKE SMITH
LAS VEGAS SUN 2020

Talking points

By JOSE S. DELA CRUZ
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Editor's Note: The following is the author's talking points in the Marianas Agupa radio talk show.

The lack of maturity in the political development of the CNMI

The establishment of the House of Representatives ad hoc committee on fiscal investigations of the Executive Branch is a positive step, but it is just a single step in a positive direction.

A single positive step in our exercise of self-government does not signify political maturity for the Commonwealth. When you weigh all of the negative publicity that our leaders (both elected and appointed) have engaged in of over the past 42 years, our positive experience at self-government still falls short. Over the years, so many of our public officials have been accused of corrupt activities while in office, and many have been convicted and sentenced to serve time in federal prison.

From the hiring of ghost employees, to the bribery of public officials in federally-funded projects, to corruption in the expenditure of public funds, to the impeachment and removal from office of a CNMI governor, and to the conviction of a lieutenant governor, CNMI public officials still have a lot to learn in terms of good governance.

As all of us know, we have three branches of government—the executive, the legislative and the judicial branches. All of our elected officials took an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth. Our Constitution sets forth their duties and responsibilities. Their primary role is to serve all the people of the CNMI. Yet when they assume office, many of them forget about the people who voted them into office and a number of them start acting to benefit themselves or their friends and cronies.

One of the most glaring examples of self-dealing between our elected leaders and their business cronies was the enactment of the exclusive Saipan casino gaming legislation about five years ago. That legislation was rushed through the CNMI Legislature at the insistence of our executive officers and the interested investor. The potential consequences of such "private legislation" were fully not considered. Indeed, the exclusive casino gaming legislation was enacted against the wishes of a large majority of the people of the CNMI. Still, our lawmakers went ahead and passed this exclusive casino license legislation.

Today, the exclusive casino gaming scheme appears to be unraveling in real time before our very eyes. As all of us are aware, the casino licensee's construction project has literally stopped for almost two years now. And the apparent reason for the standstill in the construction project is that the exclusive casino licensee has apparently run out of money. The exclusive casino licensee, five years ago, publicized that it had $7.1 billion to invest in the Saipan casino industry. It is now apparent that the company never had this huge amount of money, from the beginning.

So in terms of the political maturity of our government, I must sadly say that our elected officials, for over the last 15-20 years, are like the "gang that couldn't shoot straight." We still have a lot of growing up to do. And quite clearly, we still have a long way to go towards achieving political maturity.

The grounds warranting impeachment of a CNMI executive officer

Only the CNMI Legislature has the power to impeach and remove from office a CNMI executive branch or judicial branch officer. As we know, it is an extremely serious matter to impeach and remove from office an elected executive officer or judicial officer. But this is one of the areas that the legislative branch has constitutional authority over.

At least two-thirds of the members of the House of Representatives must vote to impeach (i.e. to formally accuse) an executive officer or a judicial officer for committing any of the specified constitutional grounds for impeachment.

And at least two-thirds of the CNMI Senate must vote to convict and remove from office an executive or judicial officer.

The grounds for impeaching an executive officer (i.e. the governor or lt. governor) are for treason, commission of a felony, corruption, or neglect of duty.

The grounds for impeaching a judicial officer (i.e. justices and judges) are for treason, conviction of a felony, corruption, neglect of duty, or for conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude.

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What Pompeo gets right—and wrong—about China

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo traveled to the Nixon Presidential Library last week to proclaim the American opening to China a grand failure. "What do the American people have to show now 50 years on from engagement with China?" Pompeo asked. His answer: not much.

China, the secretary of state intoned, had become a menacing tyranny that had succeeded economically only by robbing America of its jobs and its ideas and now threatened its freedom. Instead of continuing "the old paradigm of blind engagement with China," Pompeo called for unrelenting pressure to force Beijing to change its ways.

While clear-eyed about the challenges China now poses, Pompeo's critique of the past is misplaced, and his strategy for the future is missing key elements necessary for its success.

None of Trump's predecessors pursued a policy of "blind engagement"—least of all Richard Nixon, whose opening to China was perhaps his proudest presidential achievement. Nixon's goal was not to transform the country into a capitalist democracy, but to use it as a bulwark against the Soviet Union to help win the Cold War. In that, it succeeded.

Every president since Nixon has sought to shape China's behavior through a mixture of economic engagement, political dialogue and military hedging. Some were more successful than others. But none were blind to the challenges of engaging China.

Pompeo is right, however, that China today is different from the China many had hoped would emerge after decades of steady engagement. China's politics didn't liberalize, its economy didn't open up and its foreign policy didn't moderate.

Instead of liberalizing, China under Xi Jinping has become increasingly autocratic. Beijing has repressed its Uighur population by putting millions in detention camps, crushed dissent by establishing an electronic surveillance state and curtailed political freedoms in Hong Kong by imposing a new national security law.

Rather than opening up its economy and offering a level playing field, China has sought to steal a march on its competitors by stealing intellectual property, forcing technology transfers, closing its markets to outside competitors and subsidizing its industries.

And as its military has grown in capability, size and reach, China has sought to intimidate its neighbors. It's sent warships into Japanese waters near the Senkaku Islands, rammed fishing vessels and staked illegal claims on rocks and reefs across the South China Sea, seized disputed lands held by India and sailed an aircraft carrier through the Taiwan Straits. In each case, the message is clear: China is laying claim on lands that belong to others.

All of these developments are deeply disturbing. They're also not terribly surprising. A powerful China is no longer content to bide its time. Nor will it continue to live by the rules drawn up by others. Like all big powers, Beijing will use its economic weight and military might to try and shape the international environment in ways that suit its own interests.

But China will succeed in that effort only if we let it. We still have the power to shape China's choices, especially if we work together with our allies and partners to stand in Beijing's way.

We could lead an effort among our friends and in international bodies to condemn Beijing's repression of Uighurs and its flagrant violation of Hong Kong's political independence, and levy coordinated sanctions to increase the costs on China for its unacceptable behavior.

We could work with our partners to reform the World Trade Organization and develop new standards on issues such as state-owned enterprises and digital trade and revive the arbitration panel to enforce new and old rules alike.

We could marshal the military forces of our allies in Asia, and also in Europe, to enforce freedom of navigation on the high seas and deny China its ability to intimidate weaker neighbors. China's military has grown, but it is still no match for the combined might of the American and allied armed forces.

Pompeo, in his Nixon Library speech, paid lip service to working with our friends and allies in countering China. But to most of them that call sounds hollow after three-plus years of being treated more as trade rivals and security paymasters than as real partners in a common cause.

Rather than leading the world in opposing China's human rights violations, according to John Bolton, President Donald Trump told Xi that building camps "was exactly the right thing to do." Rather than working to reform the WTO, Washington undermined it by blocking its arbitration functions. Rather than strengthening our alliances, the administration has withdrawn troops from Germany and told Asian allies to pay more if they wanted American forces to stay.

Pompeo is right to see China's rise as a clear and present danger, but the administration's dismissal of allies and alliances has severely undermined the most effective response to that danger.

By IVO DAALDER
Chicago Tribune

Ivo Daalder is the president of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and a former U.S. ambassador to NATO.

TALKING

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There are no "minimum violations" of these grounds, in order to be impeached and removed from office. You are either guilty of corruption (e.g. bribery) or not. You are either guilty of treason (i.e. betraying your country to the enemy) or not. Or you are either guilty of neglect of duty (i.e. failing to carry out your official duties and responsibilities) or not.

With respect to a judicial officer, he or she has to be actually *convicted* of a felony; and, he/she must be convicted for any crime involving "moral turpitude." It may be only for a misdemeanor (i.e., an offense punishable by not more than one year imprisonment).

As a co-equal branch of government, the CNMI Judiciary is not "obligated" to provide "guidance" to the two other branches of government

The duties and responsibilities of the judicial branch are spelled out in the NMI Constitution. It has been called the "least dangerous branch" because it is not a political branch. The courts are established to decide cases between individuals, and between parties or entities, including the CNMI government. It may, however, conduct legal education seminars for incoming lawmakers, in terms of the NMI Constitution, the NMI Covenant, legislative procedures and rules pertaining to the enactment of CNMI laws, and so forth, but the judiciary has no obligation to do so.

The Office of the Attorney General, similarly, could also conduct an education program for members of the Legislature, but it is not obligated to do so. Further, because the legislature is an independent branch of government and the AG (although now an elected office) is a part of the executive branch, it is probably not wise for the AG to be instructing the Legislature on what it can or cannot do.

The best guidance that the legislative branch can get is from reading the NMI Constitution and laws, and the rules of the House or the Senate, or they may seek the advice of their legislative counsel.

Recommendation to CNMI government leaders with respect to fiscal management

The best recommendation that I could give to CNMI public officials or to anyone with respect to fiscal management is the adage "to live within your means." You cannot spend money that you don't have. You should not incur a debt obligation that you cannot repay. This is especially true for the CNMI government. If the CNMI is to borrow money, it must be for something that is permissible under the NMI Constitution, is critically important for the general public, and the government must have the ability to repay the debt.

When the government unwisely or intentionally misspends public funds and now wants to borrow money in order to provide essential public service, the Legislature has an obligation to carefully scrutinize the proposed authorization to borrow money before allowing such public indebtedness.

As the branch of government with the exclusive power over "the public purse," the legislative branch has a fundamental obligation to scrutinize carefully and in detail all expenditure of public funds. The annual budget passed by the Legislature must be adhered to by every public official having the expenditure authority in the CNMI government.

Finally, I believe that there should never be a 100% reprogramming authority given to any public official with the expenditure authority in the CNMI government, including the Legislature. Such unfettered reprogramming authority invites the misuse and abuse of public funds by the official that is given such reprogramming authority.

One of the most problematic areas for public officials with authority over the expenditure of public funds relates to the so-called "discretionary funds" that is given key officials of the three branches of government. These discretionary funds, for example, are given to the governor and lieutenant governor, the heads of the Judiciary and the heads of the legislative branches. Such discretionary funds should be used for official functions and events only, and not for entertaining friends and cronies, or for paying the drinks of friends at a restaurant or bar.

Further, the official functions and events where discretionary funds could be used must be spelled out clearly in the laws and regulations that govern such discretionary funds and their uses. When there are no clear restrictions on the use of such discretionary funds, there is always a temptation to abuse or misuse such discretionary funds by the public official given the expenditure authority over such funds.

Jose S. Dela Cruz is a former chief justice of the CNMI Supreme Court.

MARS

From Page 8

Isn't that amazing? This isn't science fiction. It's a product of a Mars exploration effort decades in the making. And this time the United States is not alone. Studying Mars is now an international effort with the United Arab Emirates' Hope and China's Question to Heaven spacecraft already on their way, the former destined to circle the planet to study its weather and the latter to send its own rover to the surface.

Now, cut to the final reel and imagine if Perseverance discovers evidence of some one-celled organism that lived on Mars 3.7 billion years ago when the planet was more habitable with a watery surface. Fossils? Maybe not but some trace of organic chemicals could exist. Will third planet inhabitants see such a breakthrough as the answer to the eternal question, is there life beyond Earth, or as a fraud perpetrated by the liberal eggheads with their fake news co-conspirators?

Here's a good pretest: Is the person reacting to such an event wearing a mask to prevent the virus from spreading or still insisting that hydroxychloroquine is a cure so why bother? Sometimes reality truly is stranger than fiction. Onward.

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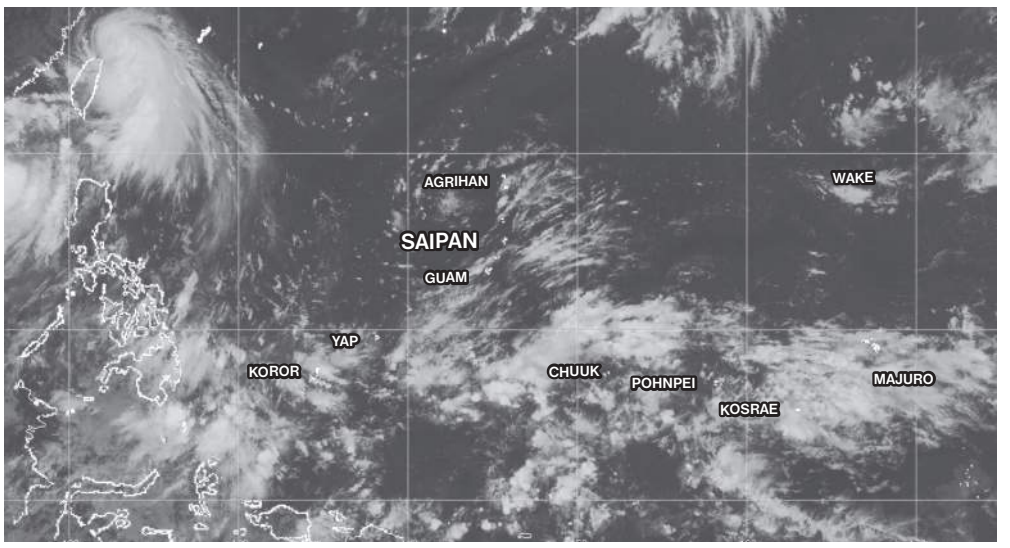
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly sunny with isolated showers and thunderstorms. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.
89° 79°	89° 79°	88° 76°	88° 76°	88° 76°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:20 AM, MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

An elongated upper low is centered northwest of the islands near 16N143E. Brisk SW winds aloft are helping to spark isolated brief thunderstorms across the region. Meanwhile…a trade-wind trough is producing clouds and showers southeast of the Marianas across northern Chuuk State. Buoys are reporting combined seas of 3 to 5 feet, and moderate trade winds are present across the coastal waters.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 81°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:00 AM	6:45 PM
Wednesday	6:00 AM	6:45 PM
Thursday	6:00 AM	6:44 PM
Friday	6:00 AM	6:44 PM
Saturday	6:01 AM	6:44 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	6:12 AM	7:23 PM
Wednesday	-	7:06 AM	8:06 PM
Thursday	-	7:57 AM	8:45 PM
Friday	-	8:46 AM	9:22 PM
Saturday	-	9:33 AM	9:57 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	55° / 45°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	93° / 77°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	90° / 82°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	88° / 76°
London	Partly Cloudy	64° / 63°
Los Angeles	Sunny	92° / 72°
Manila	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Melbourne	Cloudy	55° / 45°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	89° / 83°
New York	Thunderstorms	84° / 73°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	91° / 79°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	82° / 63°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	88° / 77°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	104° / 79°
Salem	Thunderstorms	81° / 70°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	67° / 58°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	91° / 77°
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	82° / 72°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	89° / 73°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
2:21 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.29
7:09 AM	LOW TIDE	2.02
2:30 PM	HIGH TIDE	-0.11
9:24 PM	LOW TIDE	1.97

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				**GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN**			
UA117	7:30am	8:10am	1, 4, 6	UA174	5:50am	6:31am	1, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301.2	8:30AM	9:00AM	Tues/Fri
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Tues/Fri

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101.2	9:30AM	10:00AM	Tues/Fri
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Tues/Fri

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

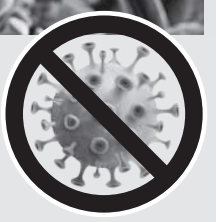
SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1212	18:00	18:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

STOP THE SPREAD



The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklist-household-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❏ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❏ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❏ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❏ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

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Business

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Free In Saipan beachwear are simple, light, and practical.

'Free in Saipan' takes you to endless summers

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Free In Saipan tees are classy and comfortable.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Free In Saipan has tees and apparel for men, women, and children.

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Many people dream to live the island life where everything is easy and light. With shirts and apparel from Free In Saipan carrying designs inspired by the sites and scenes on Saipan, the dream becomes a reality of endless summers and lifelong vacation.

Owner Ashley Reiko Pangelinan with her husband Fayce started Free In Saipan last year. The couple lived in Tokyo, Japan and in 2017 the call of calm and stress-free living made them come back to Saipan.

"We love Tokyo but everyday life here is much more relaxing and stress free. Saipan is beautiful, the weather is great, and we really feel 'free' to do anything and anytime we want. We don't have to worry about everyday hassles of city life… Hence the name 'Free in Saipan,'" she said.

"My husband could not find any 'tees' that he really liked, so he suggested that we design our own T-shirts. We came up with a first design and showed it to our local friends who gave us positive feedback and from there, we decided to continue this project on a more serious basis," she added.

Free In Saipan started as a pet project, according to this Kagman High School alumna, and trying to communicate the idea of "island life" through their designs to locals and tourists is a huge driving factor for Pangelinan.

"We have a very simple principle that we follow when we are thinking of a new design or product, and that we would not sell anything that we would not wear. We believe that if we are happy about the quality and design, the feel on the skin, then our customers will be happy too," she said.

"The feedback that we have received from our customers gives us comfort as we abide by that principle. We are not trying to compete with other local brands. We are just trying to bring something new and different to the customers," she added.

Free In Saipan shirts and apparel vary in design and sizes and available for children and adults. The brand is easily recognizable—the name is clearly visible and it features a local bird, the Mariana kingfisher, to complete the tropical vibe. "These days we sell mostly directly to our local customers but our products are also available in Boarderline and All Star Sporting Goods in Garapan and at the souvenir shop of Aqua Resort Club. The managers of both shops have been very supportive since that start of our collaboration," Pangelinan said.

"Due to COVID-19, all the businesses are suffering because the economy depends entirely on the tourist industry and tourists won't be back before long and our business is no different. We made some investments before the crisis and we had to slow things down but we found some support from the local community… so we shifted our focus to local customers… Without the local community, our little pet project would not have evolved to what it is today… and we want to thank them for that," Pangelinan added.

For more information, send them a message on Facebook "Freeinsaipan," Instagram '@freeinsaipan," or send them an email at hafadai@freeinsaipan.com.

Microsoft confirms talks seeking to buy US arm of TikTok

NEW YORK (AP)—Microsoft confirmed Sunday it is in talks with Chinese company ByteDance to acquire the U.S. arm of its popular video app TikTok and has discussed with President Donald Trump his concerns about security and censorship surrounding such an acquisition.

In a statement, Microsoft said Microsoft and ByteDance have provided notice of their intent to explore a deal resulting in Microsoft owning and operating the TikTok service in the U.S., Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The company said it expects those talks to conclude by Sept. 15.

Trump said on Friday that he would soon ban TikTok in the United States. Trump and CEO Satya Nadella have spoken, the company said, and Microsoft was prepared to continue exploring the purchase of TikTok's U.S. operations after their conversation.

"Microsoft fully appreciates the importance of addressing the President's concerns. It is committed to acquiring TikTok subject to a complete security review and providing proper economic benefits to the United States, including the United States Treasury," the Microsoft statement said.

The White House did not immediately comment on the Microsoft statement.

Previously, there were reports that Microsoft was in advanced talks to buy the U.S. operations of TikTok, which has been a source of national security and censorship concerns for the Trump administration. Earlier Sunday, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo again raised the administration's warnings about social media platform.

"These Chinese software companies doing business in the United States, whether it's TikTok or WeChat—there are countless more ... are feeding data directly to the Chinese Communist Party, their national security apparatus," Pompeo said on Fox News Channel's "Sunday Morning Futures."

"Could be their facial recognition patterns. It could be information about their residence, their phone numbers, their friends, who they're connected to. Those—those are the issues that President Trump has made clear we're going to take care of," Pompeo said.

In its statement, Microsoft said it may invite other American investors to participate on a minority basis in the purchase of TikTok. Financial terms were undisclosed.

TikTok's U.S. user data is stored in the U.S., with strict controls on employee access, and its biggest investors come from the U.S., the company said earlier Sunday. "We are committed to protecting our users' privacy and safety as we continue working to bring joy to families and meaningful careers to those who create on our platform," a TikTok spokesperson said.

A federal committee has been reviewing whether Trump could ban TikTok in the U.S. Its members agree that TikTok cannot remain in the U.S. in its current form because it "risks sending back information on 100 million Americans," Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said.

"We all agree there has to be a change ... everybody agrees it can't exist as it does," Mnuchin said Sunday on ABC's "This Week."

DOCOMO Pacific completes network installation at The Tsubaki Tower

TAMUNING, Guam—DOCOMO Pacific, regional leader in innovation, telecommunications, and entertainment, completed network installation at The Tsubaki Tower in time for soft-opening.

In August 2019, DOCOMO Pacific was honored when selected by PHR Ken Micronesia to be the official telecommunications service provider for The Tsubaki Tower. Although our teams have installed services in other hotels on island, this was the first time we were involved in designing the network in tandem with the hotel's build-out. The Tsubaki Tower project involved a concerted effort from cross-functional teams who worked persistently, despite unforeseen delays and the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The project was delivered in time for the property's soft-opening.

"We take immense pride in facilitating the delivery of excellent products and services. Naturally, we were very happy to collaborate with the Tsubaki Tower's team to enhance their customer's experience through world-class technology. From our procurement team getting specialized equipment from Japan, to our Field team who worked alongside Tsubaki's construction teams, we attribute the project's success to their excellent teamwork. Together, we work better! We congratulate the Tsubaki Tower team and wish them much success," said Marilyn Borja, DOCOMO Pacific executive vice president, Enterprise Business Unit.

The Tsubaki Tower's soft opening took place on July 1, 2020. The 27-storied hotel has 340 rooms, each equipped with 60 inch smart TVs. Through our partnership with MVI Systems, customers will experience an IPTV-based entertainment solution offering high quality entertainment and the following features:

- Check-in/Check-out
- Room Changes
- Airplay (connecting your smartphone to TV)
- eConcierge

DOCOMO Pacific has also installed a DAS system, which allows DOCOMO Pacific customers to have increased cellular coverage throughout the hotel.

If you are interested in learning more about The Tsubaki Tower, please visit their website at https://tsubakitower.premierhotelgroup.com/guam/. ***(PR)***

Nation

Parents struggle as schools reopen amid coronavirus surge

By DENISE LAVOIE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Molly Ball talks to her son Henry about plans to send him back to in-person classes this fall, as they stand outside their house in Woodstock, Ga., Thursday, July 23, 2020. AP

Shannon Dunn has to report in person to her job this week as a cafeteria manager at an elementary school in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but she has no idea what she'll do when her daughter starts kindergarten with online-only instruction.

As a new school year begins this week in some states, Dunn, like many working parents, is struggling to balance her job with her child's school work as the coronavirus pandemic continues to cause upheaval in school districts around the country.

Dunn's East Baton Rouge school district has asked school employees to begin work this week, while students are set to begin virtual classes next week. School officials have said they hope to begin in-person classes after Labor Day.

"My family works. I have no one I can take her to and say, okay, at 12 o'clock you are going to have to start working online with her for school," Dunn said.

Parents in Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee are among those who will be the first to navigate the new academic year as schools open up in parts of those states this week.

In Indiana, where schools reopened last week for the first time since a pandemic-driven nationwide shutdown in March, a student at Greenfield-Central Junior High School tested positive for the coronavirus on the first day back to class. School Superintendent Harold Olin told The Associated Press that the student was tested for the virus days earlier and attended school before receiving the results. The student was isolated in the school clinic, while school nurses worked to identify other students or staff who may have had close contact with the student.

"This really does not change our plans," Olin said. "We knew that we would have a positive case at some point in the fall. We simply did not think it would happen on Day One."

Schools in Hawaii were supposed to reopen Tuesday, but the teachers union led a move to delay that until Aug 17.

Most schools in the state are planning a hybrid approach, with students alternating between attending in-person classes and online instruction. Some schools will have full in-person instruction for younger grade levels, but only a handful of schools will offer a full-time, in-person return.

Many school districts around the country had offered parents a choice of at least some in-person classes or remote instruction. But an uptick in COVID-19 cases in many states has prompted school districts to scrap in-person classes at least for the start of the school year, including Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Washington.

Dunn said she hopes her daughter will be able to attend in-person classes at her school after Labor Day. But even if she does, that will not ease her mother's mind completely.

"I'm definitely going to worry," Dunn said.

"I will send her to in-person classes, but if I hear of the spread of COVID at the school, then I'd have to rethink it all over again."

Despite virus threat, Black voters wary of voting by mail

DETROIT (AP)—Despite fears that the coronavirus pandemic will worsen, Victor Gibson said he's not planning to take advantage of Michigan's expanded vote-by-mail system when he casts his ballot in November.

The retired teacher from Detroit just isn't sure he can trust it. Many Black Americans share similar concerns and are planning to vote in person on Election Day, even as mail-in voting expands to more states as a safety precaution during the pandemic.

For many, historical skepticism of a system that tried to keep Black people from the polls and worries that a mailed ballot won't get counted outweigh the prospect of long lines and health dangers from a virus that's disproportionately affected communities of color. Ironically, suspicion of mail-in voting aligns with the views of President Donald Trump, whom many Black voters want out of office.

Trump took it a step further Tuesday, suggesting a "delay" to the Nov. 3 presidential election—which would take an act of Congress—as he made unsubstantiated allegations in a tweet that increased mail-in voting will result in fraud.

"I would never change my mind" about voting in person in November, said Gibson, who is Black and hopes Trump loses. "I always feel better sliding my ballot in. We've heard so many controversies about missing absentee ballots."

Decades of disenfranchisement are at the heart of the uneasy choice facing Black voters, one of the Democratic Party's most important voting groups. Widespread problems with mail-in ballots during this year's primary elections have added to the skepticism at a time when making Black voices heard has taken on new urgency during a national reckoning over racial injustice.

Patricia Harris of McDonough, Georgia, south of Atlanta, voted in person in the primary and said she will do the same in November.

"I simply do not trust mail-in or absentee ballots," said Harris, 73, a retired event coordinator at Albany State University. "After the primary and the results were in, there were thousands of absentee ballots not counted."

In Georgia, roughly 12,500 mail-in ballots were rejected in the state's June primary, while California tossed more than 100,000 absentee ballots during its March primary.

Reasons vary, from ballots being received after the deadline to voters' signatures not matching the one on file with the county clerk. Multiple studies show mail-in ballots from Black voters, like those from Latino and young voters, are rejected at a higher rate than those of white voters.

In Wisconsin's April primary, thousands of voters in Milwaukee said they didn't receive absentee ballots in time and had to vote in person. Lines stretched several blocks, and people waited two hours or more.

In Kentucky's June primary, more than 8,000 absentee ballots were rejected in Jefferson County, which includes Louisville.

Many people in Louisville's historically Black West End neighborhood voted in person because they didn't receive an absentee ballot or simply wanted to vote in a way that was familiar to them, said Arii Lynton-Smith, an organizer with Black Lives Matter Louisville.

"That's particularly why we knew we had to have the poll rides as an option," she said, referring to groups offering voters free transportation to polling places. "It's not as easy to do an absentee ballot and the things that come along with it than it is to just go in person."

Mistrust by Black voters runs deep and is tightly bound within the nation's dark past of slavery and institutional racism.

Black people endured poll taxes, tossed ballots, even lynchings by whites intent on keeping them from voting. Over the decades, that led to a deep suspicion of simply handing off a ballot to the post office. Black people were the demographic least likely to cast votes by mail in 2018, with only 11% using that method, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. By comparison, 24% of whites and 27% of Latinos reported voting by mail that year.

"For Black folks, voting is almost like a social pride because of the way they were denied in the past," said Ben Barber, a researcher and writer for the Institute for Southern Studies in Durham, North Carolina.

Isaias strengthens slightly as it crawls up Florida coast

VERO BEACH, Fla. (AP)—Bands of heavy rain from Isaias lashed Florida's east coast Sunday, with the tropical storm strengthening slightly and forecast to be near hurricane strength by the time it reaches the Carolinas.

Officials dealing with surging cases of the coronavirus in Florida kept a close watch on the storm that was weakened from a hurricane to a tropical storm Saturday afternoon, but still brought heavy rain and flooding to Florida's Atlantic coast.

The National Hurricane Center advised at 11 p.m. EDT Sunday that the storm was centered about 50 miles (80 kilometers) east of Cape Canaveral, Florida, and about 365 miles (585 kilometers) south of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

It strengthened slightly earlier in the evening with maximum sustained winds just under a Category 1 hurricane, taking a north-northwest path, according to the center.

"Don't be fooled by the downgrade," Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis warned at a news conference after the storm—pronounced ees-ah-EE-ahs —spent hours roughing up the Bahamas.

Upper-level winds took much of the strength out of Isaias, said Stacy Stewart, senior hurricane specialist at the hurricane center in Miami.

"We were expecting a hurricane to develop and it didn't," Stewart said Sunday. "It's a tale of two storms. If you live on the west side of the storm, you didn't get much. If you live east of the storm, there's a lot of nasty weather there."

Authorities closed beaches, parks and virus testing sites, lashing signs to palm trees so they wouldn't blow away. DeSantis said the state is anticipating power outages and asked residents to have a week's supply of water, food and medicine on hand. Officials wrestled with how to prepare shelters where people can seek refuge from the storm if necessary, while also safely social distancing to prevent the spread of the virus.

Asia

PH COVID-19 cases top 100,000 in 'losing battle'

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Coronavirus infections in the Philippines surged past 100,000 Sunday in a troubling milestone after medical groups declared that the country was waging "a losing battle" against the virus and asked the president to reimpose a lockdown in the capital.

The Department of Health reported a record-high daily tally of 5,032, bringing the total confirmed cases in the country to 103,185, including more than 2,000 deaths. The Philippines has the second-most cases in Southeast Asia after Indonesia, and has had more infections than China, where the pandemic began late last year.

President Rodrigo Duterte eased a tough virus lockdown in the capital, Manila—a city of more than 12 million people—on June 1 after the economy shrank slightly in the first quarter, its first contraction in more than two decades. After shopping malls and workplaces were partially reopened and limited public transport was allowed, infections spiked sharply with increased virus testing.

More than 50,000 infections were reported in less than four weeks and leading hospitals began warning that their coronavirus wards were fast being overwhelmed to capacity again, as they were when cases soared alarmingly in April.

After Duterte further relaxed quarantine restrictions and allowed more businesses, including gyms, internet cafes and tattoo shops, to reopen, leaders of nearly 100 medical organizations held an online news conference Saturday and warned that the health system may collapse as many medical personnel fall ill or resign out of fear, fatigue or poor working conditions.

"Our health care workers are burnt out with the seemingly endless number of patients trooping to our hospitals," the medical groups said in a letter to Duterte that they read at the news conference.

They pleaded for the president to reimpose a lockdown in Manila from Aug. 1 to 15 to give health workers "a time out" and allow the government to recalibrate its response to the monthslong pandemic.

"We are waging a losing battle against COVID-19 and we need to draw up a consolidated, definitive plan of action," said the groups, which represent more than a million nurses, doctors and other medical personnel.

The groups said the gradual easing of coronavirus restrictions "has inadvertently fueled public misperception that the pandemic is getting better. It is not."

They expressed fears to Duterte that the Philippine coronavirus crisis may worsen like in the U.S. "The progressive decline in compliance will push us to the brink to become the next New York City, where COVID-19 patients die at home or in stretchers, unable to find vacancies."

The U.S. has had more than 4.6 million confirmed infections and more than 154,000 deaths, by far the highest tolls in the world, based on Johns Hopkins University tallies.

Leaders of the Philippines' dominant Roman Catholic church immediately heeded the medical community's call, saying they will return to lockdown-like restrictions by temporarily stopping actual church services in Manila and shift all Masses back online.

"It seems that the current responses are not working because the cases are rising," Bishop Broderick Pabillo said.

Cabinet members have met with medical industry leaders and were to meet with Duterte on Sunday to decide on a response, presidential spokesman Harry Roque said.

Businesses in the capital and outlying regions comprise about 67% of the national economy and the administration has walked a tightrope between public health and economic revival, Roque said.

Critics have accused Duterte and his top officials of failing to immediately launch massive virus tests to be able to identify and contain hotspots early on, especially when they placed the capital under a police-enforced lockdown in mid-March. The poverty-stricken country has struggled with polio, measles and cholera outbreaks for years and officials have been aware of inadequate health resources long before the pandemic hit, the critics said.

Duterte has also acknowledged that corruption by local officials tainted a massive cash aid program for about 23 million poor families that has been widely criticized for delays and chaotic enforcement.

A leading source of global labor, the Philippines, like Indonesia, has additionally been battered after hundreds of thousands of Filipinos, including cruise ship crews, lost their jobs worldwide due to the pandemic then scrambled to head home.

The government has helped bring home more than 115,000 Filipinos from across the world since February and another 100,000 need to be repatriated in the next two months in the largest such pandemic-sparked homecoming in Philippine history, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Heavy rain hammers South Korea, leaving 6 dead, 7 missing

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Torrential rain pounded most of South Korea over the weekend, leaving six people dead and seven others missing, officials said Sunday.

The Ministry of the Interior and Safety said the heavy rainfall triggered landslides in dozens of places, flooded residential areas and roads, and damaged some riverside structures.

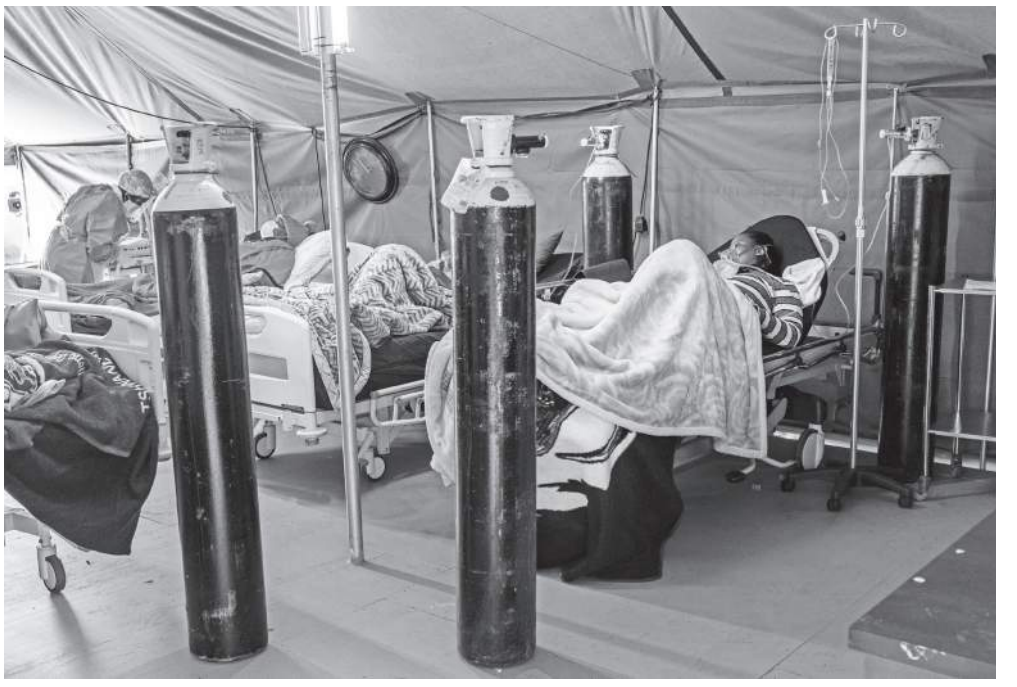
Much of the damage occurred in the Seoul metropolitan area and the central region.

The ministry said the six dead people were either buried by mud or destroyed building parts following landslides or swept away by swollen waters. Ministry officials said one died on Saturday and the other five on Sunday, all in the Seoul metropolitan area or the central region.

The torrential rain also left six people injured and 360 others homeless, the ministry said.

The Seoul area and the central region are expected to continue to receive heavy rain until Monday morning.

World



This July 10, 2020 file photo shows Covid-19 patients being treated with oxygen at the Tshwane District Hospital in Pretoria, South Africa. AP

S. Africa hits 500K infections

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—South Africa has surpassed 500,000 confirmed coronavirus cases, but President Cyril Ramaphosa said Sunday he sees "promising signs" that the rapid growth of cases has stabilized and that the country's strained health system is managing to cope.

Health Minister Zwelini Mkhize announced 10,107 new cases Saturday night, bringing the country's cumulative total to 503,290, including 8,153 deaths. South Africa has now tallied more than 50% of all reported coronavirus infections in Africa's 54 countries.

With a population of about 58 million, South Africa has the fifth-highest number of cases in the world, behind the U.S., Brazil, Russia and India, all countries with significantly higher populations, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. Experts say the true toll of the pandemic worldwide is much higher than confirmed cases, due to limited testing and other reasons.

Ramaphosa, in a letter to the nation on Sunday, said despite the high number of confirmed cases, he sees some positive developments.

"After a rapid rise in infections over the last two months, the daily increase in infections appears to be stabilizing," said Ramaphosa. He said the number of new infections has slowed in the provinces of the Western Cape, which includes Cape Town, the Eastern Cape and Gauteng, which hosts the major cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria.

South Africa's hospitals have been stretched to the limit but in most provinces they are succeeding in providing treatment to COVID-19 patients, he said.

"The health system has so far had sufficient capacity to cope with the number of admissions," said Ramaphosa of the hard-hit provinces of Western Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. He said, however, that in the Eastern Cape several public hospitals were overwhelmed and a specialist team has been deployed to help.

He said his government is working hard with "greatest urgency" to deliver adequate supplies of personal protective equipment to areas where shortages have been reported. South African authorities are also working to root out corruption in the purchase and distribution of medical equipment, he said.

"It is unconscionable that there are people who may be using this health crisis to unlawfully enrich themselves," said Ramaphosa.

South Africa's case fatality rate—the number of deaths as a proportion of confirmed cases—is at 1.6%, significantly lower than the global average, said Ramaphosa.

"While South Africa has the fifth-highest number of total COVID-19 cases globally, we have only the 36th highest number of deaths as a proportion of the population," said Ramaphosa. "For this, we are grateful to the work of our health professionals and the innovative treatments they have pioneered."

South Africa also has a younger population than countries in Europe that were hard hit in the pandemic, and the virus kills elderly patients at a far higher rate than younger people.

Mexico arrests violent gang leader known for emotive videos

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Mexican police and military forces on Sunday arrested the leader of the Santa Rosa de Lima gang who spread violence through north-central Mexico and fought a years-long bloody turf battle with the Jalisco cartel.

The armed forces and officials in the state of Guanajuato said they had captured José Antonio Yépez Ortiz, better known by his nickname "El Marro," which means "The Sledgehammer."

Yépez Ortiz was unusual among gang leaders because he posted videos with emotional calls to his followers, including one in June showing him appearing to cry after several of his supporters and relatives were arrested. In another video around the same time, he threatened to join forces with the Sinaloa cartel to defeat Jalisco, Mexico's fastest-rising drug cartel.

The turf battle with Jalisco turned the industrial hub of Guanajuato, with its foreign auto plants and parts suppliers, into the most violent state in Mexico, with 2,293 murders in the first six months of this year. The Santa Rosa gang has been blamed by some observers for the July attack on a drug rehabilitation center in the city of Irapuato in which 27 men were killed.

But Mexico's top civilian security official, Alfonso Durazo, said Yépez Ortiz would be charged with organized crime and fuel theft, not murder. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador—whose administration has said its main goal is no longer to detain gang leaders—praised the arrest, calling it "important, very important," noting that 15% of Mexico's murders in recent months had happened in Guanajuato.

Overdrive

By SCOTT STURGIS
THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

2020 Mazda MX-5 Miata Club RF: As fun with a hardtop?

Price: $34,565 as tested. No options on test vehicle. (The Club is the midlevel MX-5, between Sports and Grand Touring.)

Conventional wisdom: Motor Trend likes the "pure driving joy, distilled, super-simple soft top operation, good fuel economy," but not that it's "nervous at the limit, teeny tiny trunk capacity."

Marketer's pitch: "Give in to the temptation."

Reality: All the other marketing departments can go home; Mazda just won marketer's pitches.

Summer fun: Test-driving this car was like coming down to earth—literally riding near the road and enjoying the open air.

What's new: The little two-seater gets some new features available at lower trim levels and standard sport-tuned suspension on Grand Touring.

Summer fun: I always forget that the RF comes with a retractable roof (RF = retractable fastback, smart guy). It's not quite the same as a convertible, with the rear window and pillars still in place, but it's pretty close.

On the road: There's nothing quite like riding around at eye level with the tiger lilies on a summer drive. Especially when the MX-5 makes all the right moves. Zipping around the countryside remains a blast.

Shifty: An automatic in a two-seater should be against the law. Even a shiftable one. Especially a shiftable one like this one, which won't let me shift exactly when I want to. It forever decided I was headed to second too soon, and then I'd not realize it and hear the engine whining pitifully at high revs, thinking, "Gosh if this were my car, I'd need a new transmission at 50,000 miles."

Paddle shifters are available for the six-speed, as well as the floor shifter.

On the bright side—a stick is available at all three trim levels.

Up to speed: The MX-5 seems tough to get moving, but once you're on your way, the car heads toward 60 mph as a natural setting, regardless of the posted speed limits. A sport mode does sport things up, but regular mode is plenty fun as well.

Automobile Magazine estimates the car gets to 60 in 5.8 seconds, thanks to the 2.0-liter four cylinder's 181 horsepower and 151 pound-feet of torque. That feels optimistic. (For comparison, Fiat's 124 Spider has the power numbers almost reversed, with 160 horses and 184 pound-feet, and with that kind of engine power, it feels like a blast.)

Still, getting enough oomph for passing and zooming up small ridges remains a great MX-5 feature, and that makes up for any dawdling at the stoplight.

Friend and a couple of things: Because "stuff" may be a bit of an exaggeration, although I did manage to squeeze into the trunk a chainsaw I'd rented to cut a fallen tree. It was a 20-inch saw, the big one, so there's that. (Didn't carry any logs, though.)

Later I needed gas for the mowers and offered to get a neighbor his as well. A 6-gallon can plus two 2-gallon cans fit in snugly.

Room behind the seats? Not really. There's a door with a little space between the seats that actually replaces the glovebox. A backpack goes in the trunk, if you need space for a companion. So it's a good thing I didn't bring my wife along for the gas run, or she'd have to hold a gas can or my backpack.

I did manage to get my son to ride along on an adventure with me one evening. He of the Long Legs declared the passenger comfortable and "roomy enough," as the MX-5 has grown a bit over the years.

Play some tunes: The MX-5 gets Mazda's usual stereo setup, with the stand-up iPaddy screen and the knob to scroll around it. Choosing source and stations can be a bit of a pain. I can't believe I'm saying this, but a touchscreen would work more simply. Sigh. At least it's not a touchpad.

The sound is pretty good, probably an A-. It also fights nobly against the wind noise with the top down.

My son also dubbed the exhaust note a pleasant rumble, so that's a good backup sound plan.

Keeping warm and cool: Carmakers have junked up these controls in a zillion ways, but I don't think they'll make it work any better than the MX-5. A dial for fan speed, a dial for air source, and a dial for temperature (no need for zones in a car where any COVID-19 is shared as a standard feature). You can tell the setting quickly by sight and by feel.

Fuel economy: I averaged around 28.5 mpg in a sporty 170 miles, including a highway trip. Feed the MX-5 whatever.

Where it's built: Hiroshima, Japan.

How it's built: Consumer Reports predicts the MX-5 reliability to be 5 out of 5.

In the end: Give in to the temptation, indeed.

(MAZDA/TNS)
Front view of 2020 Mazda MX-5 Miata Club RF.

2020 Mazda MX-5 RF still means a lot of fun and some summer sun

Motormouth: What's up with fuel filter?

By BOB WEBER
Chicago Tribune

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. *Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.*

Q: I have a 2011 Mazda Tribute and wanted to change the fuel filter. The manual states that it is in the gas tank and does not need to be changed. I find this strange, so I asked my local mechanic if he knew about this. He looked up gas filters for that model at his supply store and it shows one. I told him what the manual stated, but he said he believed that it does have a replaceable filter. Do you know what is going on?

A: The filter on the fuel pump pickup pipe in the tank is all that most cars have today. But your Tribute has a second, external filter located near the fuel tank. It is replaceable, but I have not heard of any getting clogged. (Maybe I should have my hearing tested for wax buildup.)

Q: I have a 2003 Jeep Liberty with 142,000 miles that is in very good condition. I have not been able to locate a squeaking sound that I think is coming from rear suspension. I have replaced all the shocks, struts, springs, and upper and lower spring isolators on the rear shocks. Noise went away for a while but is back. I was thinking about lubricating the control/suspension arms. What lubricant would you recommend? Do you have any other suggestions?

A: Squeaks and rattles often get the sunshine treatment. (They leave the vehicle outside until you return.) I suggest spraying all the rubber parts with silicone lube and the metal parts with oil or a penetrating oil. Start with one or the other to whittle down the source of the noise. My hunch is a rubber part.

Q: My son who lives in Chicago has a 2013 Hyundai Tucson that has been hit by thieves two times who have stolen the catalytic converter. Fortunately, the insurance company has paid both claims, less a $100 deductible. The garage mechanics have indicated there isn't anything they can do to inhibit or stop future thefts. So far, the insurance company has indicated they are not going to drop his coverage. Do you have any suggestions? Is this a unique problem to Hyundai vehicles?

A: SUVs, like the Tucson, are easy for the thief to slide beneath. Some bad guys even use creepers to make the job easier. There are aftermarket anti-theft devices that make it harder for the thief who will then pick an easier target. Unscrupulous scrap dealers buy the cats for the precious metals (platinum, rhodium, palladium) inside. Incidentally, Prius converters are coveted since they are larger than most others.

Q: I purchased a 2017 Nissan Rouge Sport AWD SL in August 2018. It had 8,233 miles on it. Today it has 10,508 miles _ that is 2,275 miles in a year. I went to the Nissan dealership for an oil change and was told to wait until I put on 5,000 miles. As you see it will take me another couple of years to do that. When do you think I should have the oil changed?

A: It appears that you may be making short trips, just a few miles each time. If so, your engine, and its oil, may never get hot enough to cook off any water (condensation) in the crankcase. That needs to go. If this describes you, change the oil annually.

Life & Style

Gaga, Grande top MTV VMA noms; quarantine categories added

NEW YORK (AP)—It's raining nominations for Lady Gaga and Ariana Grande's "Rain on Me" at the 2020 MTV Video Music Awards, which will present new categories focused on live performances and music videos created at home during the coronavirus pandemic.

Gaga and Grande both scored nine nominations each, including video of the year for their No. 1 dance hit. "Rain on Me" is also competing for song of the year, best collaboration, best pop, best cinematography, best visual effects and best choreography.

Billie Eilish and The Weeknd, the second-most nominated acts with six, are also up for video of the year with "everything i wanted" and "Blinding Lights." Others nominated for the top prize include Taylor Swift's "The Man," Future and Drake's "Life Is Good" and Eminem's "Godzilla," which features late rapper Juice WRLD.

The VMAs will air live on Aug. 30 from the Barclays Center in Brooklyn and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said last month "the event will follow all safety guidance, including limited or no audience." This year's show introduces two new categories reflecting the current pandemic times: best music video from home and best quarantine performance.

Grande and Justin Bieber's No. 1 hit "Stuck with U" will compete for best music video from home along with Drake's "Toosie Slide," John Legend's "Bigger Love," 5 Seconds of Summer's "Wildflower," blink-182's "Happy Days" and twenty one pilots' "Level of Concern," which topped the Billboard rock songs chart for seven weeks and features the lyrics, "Will you be my little quarantine?"

R&B duo Chloe x Halle, who have successfully promoted their new album during the pandemic with impressive live performances mostly put on in their tennis court and outside their new home, are nominated for best quarantine performance for "Do It" from MTV's virtual prom "Promathon." Other nominees include Gaga's "Smile" from the TV special "One World: Together At Home";Legend's "#togetherathome" concert; DJ D-Nice's "Club MTV presents #DanceTogether"; CNCO's "MTV Unplugged At Home"; and Post Malone's tribute to Nirvana.

Japan funds save Lithuania museum on diplomat who saved Jews

VILNIUS, Lithuania (AP)—A museum in Lithuania dedicated to a Japanese diplomat who helped thousands of Jews flee Europe in the early years of World War II has been extended an economic lifeline by people in Japan, officials said Friday.

The memorial museum in Lithuania's former capital recounts the story of Chiune Sugihara, who was a vice-consul diplomat based at the Japanese Consulate in Kaunas during 1939-1940. Its small collection is housed in the villa that once served as the consulate.

This handout photo provided by Chiune Sugihara Memorial Museum, shows a working room in Chiune Sugihara memorial museum in Kaunas, Lithuania, Tuesday, May 12, 2020. AP

The brake the coronavirus pandemic slammed on international travel has put the small museum, like other cultural institutions and tourist destinations around the world, under intense economic pressure.

"Tickets sales are our main income resource. Japanese used to make up 85% of the visitors. Now, the visitors from Japan are gone, so is our income" museum director Ramunas Janulaitis said.

However, people from Gifu Prefecture on the Japanese island of Honshu, where Sugihara was born, raised some 30,000 euros (about $35,600) to help the museum survive the pandemic.

"We expect to raise another 40,000 (euros) in the autumn" Japanese Ambassador Shiro Yamasaki said.

Both the Soviet Union and Germany occupied Lithuania during the war. The Soviets annexed the Baltic nation, which become independent in 1990.

During his time at the consulate in Kaunas, Sugihara issued transit visas to Japan to nearly 6,000 Jewish refugees, mainly from neighboring Poland. The 10-day visas he supplied without the approval of Japan's Foreign Ministry enabled the refugees to escape and survive the Holocaust.

Placido Domingo to receive lifetime award in Austria

SOAVE, Italy (AP)—Placido Domingo will make his first public appearance since recovering from coronavirus to accept a lifetime achievement award in Austria next week.

The famed tenor will receive the honor on Aug. 6 in Salzburg by the organization behind Austria's Music Prize at an invitation-only ceremony. The award, chosen by a jury of journalists, recognizes Domingo, 79, as ''one of the best and most influential vocal actors in the world,'' saying ''he has set international standards at the highest level for decades.''

Domingo

Domingo, who was treated for coronavirus in Mexico, will go on to perform this summer in Caserta, near Naples, and on Aug. 22 at the Arena di Verona in northern Italy, where he will also sing in a concert Aug. 28 and conduct on Aug. 29.

Even before the virus closed opera houses throughout the United States, Domingo saw his U.S. engagements canceled following reports last summer by The Associated Press detailing allegations of sexual harassment or inappropriate sexually charged behavior by more than 20 women.

Domingo denied the allegations, but after the American Guild of Musical Artists and LA Opera deemed the sexual harassment accusations to be credible, he issued an apology and then quickly amended it.

"My apology was sincere and heartfelt, to any colleague who I have made to feel uncomfortable, or hurt in any manner, by anything I have said or done," he wrote. "But I know what I have not done, and I'll deny it again. I have never behaved aggressively toward anyone, and I have never done anything to obstruct or hurt anyone's career."

TV host Regis Philbin buried at Notre Dame, his alma mater

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (AP)—Television host Regis Philbin, who died last week at 88, has been buried at the University of Notre Dame following a private funeral service at his alma mater, a school spokesman said.

Philbin was buried Wednesday at Cedar Grove Cemetery on the northern Indiana Catholic school's campus after a private service at the school's Basilica of the Sacred Heart.

"The Philbin family wanted to bring Regis back to the place he loved so much for a private funeral and burial. That occurred on Wednesday, and he is now resting in peace at Notre Dame," school spokesman Dennis Brown said in an email.

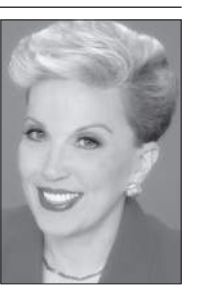
The genial television host and personality graduated from Notre Dame in 1953 and was an enthusiastic alum, often returning to the South Bend campus for football games, pep rallies, banquets, concerts and other events, the South Bend Tribune reported.

In 2001, he gave $2.75 million to the school to create the Philbin Studio Theatre, meant for laboratory and performance-arts productions, at its DeBartolo Performing Arts Center.

Widow vows never to share her bed with another man

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR ABBY: I am a single man who recently met a widow who is nine years older. We connected via an online dating site.

At the end of our three-hour conversation, she said, "No man will ever share my bed." This is because of her second husband, who died six years ago. She said if a man shared her bed, she felt it would be cheating on her late husband.

When she said it, I was surprised and shocked. I hadn't asked her if she would share my (or another man's) bed. What are your thoughts on this, and do a lot of widows adhere to this practice? Should this be considered a deal-breaker in a potential relationship? And would replacing the bed with a new one help?

SLEEPLESS IN SAN DIEGO

DEAR SLEEPLESS: Some widows—and widowers—become celibate after the death of their spouse. A phrase I have heard used is, "I've had the best, and no one can ever replace _____." I also know women and men who, after their grief has lessened, have gone on to have happy, successful second or third marriages.

What the woman you were talking with was doing was eradicating any expectation you might have had about a sexual relationship with her. She should have specified on her profile that sex was off the table. Be glad she was honest. This would be a deal-breaker for any man who is interested in maintaining his sex life. While replacing her mattress might have been a helpful suggestion, I doubt she would have been receptive. According to the mail I receive, amorous couples make love in many places besides the bedroom.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I read you every day. My daughter, the oldest of four children, and I had a falling-out because I paid for her education but she couldn't be thankful. She was very entitled as a child, but it was important to me that she graduated. She's a schoolteacher now.

When she asked me to pay for her wedding, I said, "Will you be thankful this time?" She stomped out and said, "I'll do it myself!" I learned today that she went gown shopping with my mom and her fiance's mother and excluded me. I am so angry, hurt and sad that I don't even want to go to the wedding anymore. I could use some advice here.

SAD IN ARKANSAS

DEAR SAD: I'm surprised you had to demand gratitude from your daughter. She may have not learned appreciation because she was always handed everything she wanted, so now she expects your role in her life to continue on that path. That she went gown shopping without inviting you was her way of punishing you for not forking over the money for her wedding. (I wonder if your mother and her fiance's mother are contributing.)

I do not think you should skip her wedding, regardless of how tempted you may be. That said, it is important you realize a pattern has been established in your relationship with your daughter, and she may use your grandchildren as pawns to manipulate you, so be prepared.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

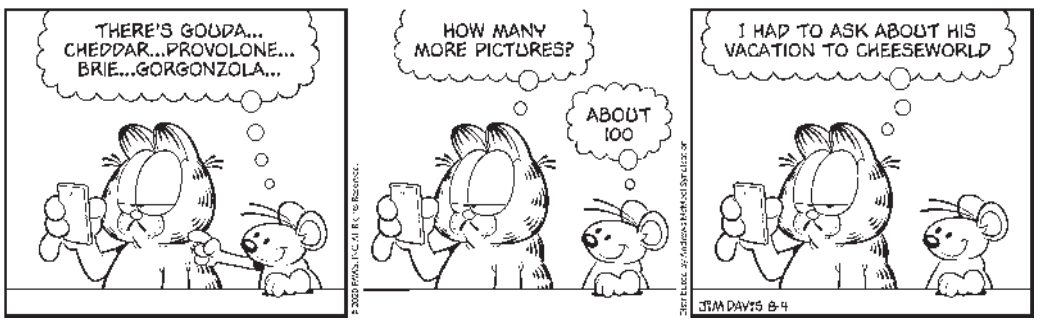
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

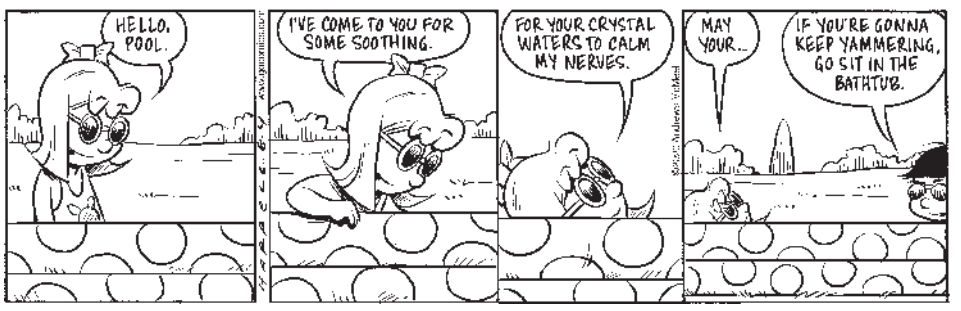
Garfield®

By Jim Davis


THERE'S GOUDA... CHEDDAR...PROVOLONE... BRIE...GORGONZOLA...
HOW MANY MORE PICTURES?
ABOUT 100
I HAD TO ASK ABOUT HIS VACATION TO CHEESEWORLD
JIM DAVIS 8-4

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


HELLO, POOL.
I'VE COME TO YOU FOR SOME SOOTHING.
FOR YOUR CRYSTAL WATERS TO CALM MY NERVES.
MAY YOUR...
IF YOU'RE GONNA KEEP YAMMERING, GO SIT IN THE BATHTUB.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

WAIT, I'M SORRY - BUT I DON'T BELIEVE YOU.
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT YOU RELATE TO THE STRUGGLE OF BEING A WOMAN?
OH, I TOOK HOME EC IN HIGH SCHOOL -

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

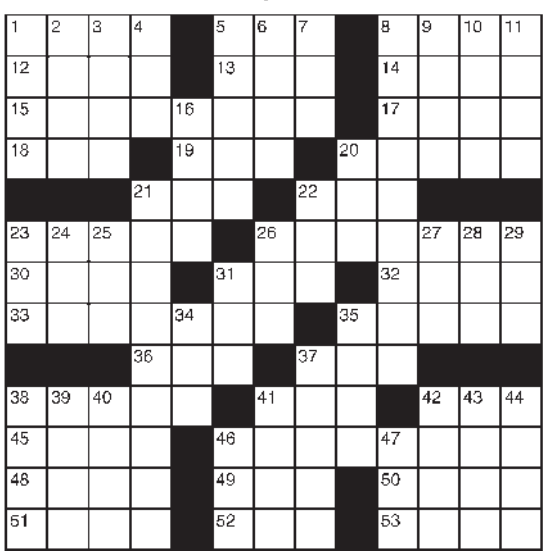
ACROSS
1 "Frozen" snowman
5 Tree fluid
8 "Unh-unh"
12 Incite
13 "Ben- —"
14 Warning sign
15 Bracco of "The Sopranos"
17 Differ
18 Hirohito's title (Abbr.)
19 Crunchy sandwich
20 Major artery
21 Cartoon frame
22 "The Voice" network
23 Handed out hands
26 School no-shows
30 To be, in Toulon
31 Nabokov novel
32 Corn Belt state
33 Dead Sea documents
35 Former U.N. leader Kofi
36 Arcing tennis shot
37 Bar supply
38 Ort
41 Chemical suffix
42 Comic DeLuise
45 Places
46 Throbbing headache
48 One-named supermodel
49 "No seats"
50 Inventor's inspiration
51 Sit for a photo
52 Retrieve
53 Missing

DOWN
1 Leer at
2 Weaving machine
3 Seniors' org.
4 New Deal pres.
5 Con artist's assistant
6 Pop's sister
7 Opposite of "post-"
8 Local anesthetic
9 Actor Epps of "This Is Us"
10 Impudent
11 New Age singer
16 Help a hood
20 Dhabi preceder
21 Grammy-winning British jazz singer
22 New Deal agcy.
23 — Moines
24 List-ending shorthand
25 Schedule abbr.
26 QB stats
27 "Smoking or —?"
28 Delta's one-time rival
29 — Juan
31 Priestly garment
34 Prune
35 Computer brand
37 Gold mold
38 Faux pas
39 Lake of Lombardy
40 Some HDTVs
41 Suffix for billion
42 Queen of Carthage
43 Till bills
44 Potatoes partner
46 Flavor enhancer, for short
47 Have a bug

Solution time: 22 mins.

B	I	B			E	B	B		L	G	B	T
U	S	E	S		W	A	R		U	N	I	V
R	E	L	O		E	L	O		N	U	T	S
R	C	A	L	M		I	T	S	A			
			A	A	H		H	E	R	O	E	S
G	L	O	R	G	I	A		A	M	P	L	E
A	I	R	E		P	I	G		O	A	S	T
G	R	A	C	E		D	O	C	D	L	E	S
S	E	L	L	E	N		T	R	U			
			I	K	E	A		S	L	I	P	S
V	E	L	P		A	S	P		E	V	A	N
O	T		S		D	I	E		S	A	R	A
M	A	Z	E		S	A	G			N	A	P

Yesterday's answer 8-4



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Cole Sprouse, 28; Dylan Sprouse, 28; Meghan Markle, 39; Barack Obama, 59.

Happy Birthday: Nurture your relationships, offer suggestions and be a part of what's happening around you. It's better to have a say in what transpires than to count on others to do anything for you. Details, honesty and integrity will matter if you plan to win over the popular vote among your peers this year. Love and romance will enhance your life. Your numbers are 5, 12, 20, 28, 35, 39, 42.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Pay more attention to what's going on around you. The changes that happen at work and home need to be well-thought-out if you are going to come out ahead. Take nothing for granted, and don't share your plans prematurely. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Refrain from getting caught up in someone's dilemma. Stay focused on what matters most. Play by the rules, and make sure you have all your paperwork in order. You have plenty to gain if you are honest and well-prepared. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Put your energy where it counts. Manipulate your skills to suit the changes going on in the workforce. Don't be fooled by someone offering empty promises. Set your sights on what works best for you. Romance is favored. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* An unusual proposal will tempt you. Follow your heart and look over every detail, and you'll come up with a plan that leads to a better position with increased earning potential. Don't let change upset you; make it work for you. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Positive action will bring good results. Don't worry about what others decide to do; do what works best for you, and carry on until you reach your destination. Romance is on the rise, and personal gain is possible. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* A change will lift your spirits. However, before you engage in something new, get details in writing. You may want to revise an offer for your protection. Work diligently to improve your skills or a service you plan to present. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Walk away from situations that are creating too much tension. Find a quiet space where you can evaluate what's happening. Once you clear your head, you'll come up with a suggestion or counteroffer that addresses everyone's concerns. Love is in the stars. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Stop worrying about what everyone else is doing; concentrate on what you want to accomplish. Put together an agreement that is enticing and fair for everyone involved. Don't take anything or anyone for granted. Pay attention to detail. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Deal with emotional matters. Clear the air, and you'll feel better about your next move. Miscommunication will give someone a chance to take advantage of you. A point-by-point assessment is favored. Make unique plans with someone you love. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Stay on top of your responsibilities. Leave no room for error; someone will scrutinize your work before it's approved. A domestic change will be dependent on how well you get along with the people who share your space. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Share your feelings and ideas with someone you love. Be open to suggestions when making plans that will influence the way you live. A makeover will give you the pick-me-up you need and boost a meaningful relationship. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* A change to the way you earn your living may be daunting, but it will also have benefits. Look on the bright side, and make the most of whatever situation you face. When one door closes, another will open. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, generous and creative. You are opportunistic and forceful.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			5					
6		9			7	1		3
	1		8				7	
	2		6		8	3		
5								2
		4	1		5		6	
	4				2		9	
3		1	4			8		6
				1				

Difficulty Level ★★ 8/04

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

3	5	8	1	9	2	6	4	7
1	7	6	8	4	5	3	2	9
2	4	9	6	3	7	8	5	1
9	6	4	7	2	3	1	8	5
8	3	1	5	6	4	9	7	2
7	2	5	9	8	1	4	3	6
6	9	2	3	7	8	5	1	4
4	1	3	2	5	9	7	6	8
5	8	7	4	1	6	2	9	3

Difficulty Level ★ 5/31

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

MAKING A PROMISE **Solution:** 10 letters

P	B	D	E	I	L	P	M	I	P	T	S	U	R	T
R	R	R	U	L	E	V	P	A	R	O	L	E	C	R
O	O	O	S	V	O	U	C	H	S	W	E	A	R	A
T	K	C	N	T	N	T	U	T	T	E	R	S	S	N
O	E	E	E	O	I	T	S	E	T	T	A	S	E	S
C	N	R	T	V	U	P	E	S	N	Y	I	E	C	A
O	S	I	G	N	E	N	U	O	S	N	S	F	U	C
L	F	W	O	R	D	R	C	L	T	H	T	O	R	T
Y	E	R	P	O	E	I	I	E	A	N	A	R	I	I
N	G	E	R	T	K	Y	N	F	M	T	T	P	T	O
O	D	S	Y	V	H	T	A	O	Y	E	E	S	Y	N
M	E	P	C	O	M	M	I	T	M	E	N	T	L	O
R	L	E	W	W	O	V	A	S	S	E	R	T	O	I
A	P	C	E	S	T	N	E	M	E	E	R	G	A	N
H	A	T	R	G	N	I	K	A	T	R	E	D	N	U

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Agreement, Assert, Attest, Avow, Broken, Commitment, Contract, Endorse, Harmony, Implied, Intent, Loan, Notify, Oath, Pact, Parole, Pledge, Protess, Pronouncement, Protocol, Record, Respect, Rule, Says, Security, Sign, State, Stipulate, Surety, Swear, Transaction, Troth, Trust, Undertaking, Union, Utter, Verify, Voters, Vouch, Vows, Word

Yesterday's Answer: Dispensers

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 40, 42, and 44 through 58 order on line at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Westbrook powers Rockets past Bucks

FLORIDA (AP)—Russell Westbrook scored 31 points and the Houston Rockets used strong defense down the stretch for a 120-116 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks on Sunday night.

It was the 36th straight game with at least 20 points for Westbrook, who led Houston's offense on a night James Harden scored 24.

Houston tied an NBA record for most 3-point attempts in a regulation game with 61, making 21 of them, and forced 22 turnovers.

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 36 points, 18 rebounds and eight assists for Milwaukee. He joined Kareem Abdul-Jabbar as the only players to have 15 games with at least 30 points, 15 rebounds and five assists in a season in the last 50 years.

Khris Middleton scored 27 points and Brook Lopez added 23 as the Bucks missed a chance to clinch the best record in the Eastern Conference.

Milwaukee led by one in the fourth quarter before Lopez scored the first four points of a 7-0 run that was capped by a 3 from Middleton to make it 112-104 with about 3 minutes remaining.

But Houston scored the next nine points, highlighted by a 3 and a steal from P.J. Tucker and a block by Harden on Antetokounmpo, to go on top 113-112 about a minute later.

Lopez ended Houston's run with a basket in the paint to make it 114-113 with less than a minute to go.

Westbrook made two free throws before a shot by Antetokounmpo left Milwaukee up 116-115 with 16.5 seconds remaining.

Westbrook made two more free throws and Danuel House stole a pass from Antetokounmpo and was fouled. He added two free throws to leave Houston up 119-116 with 14 seconds left.

Middleton missed two 3-point attempts after that to allow Houston to hold on for the victory.

The Rockets were up by two after a basket by Westbrook with about 1 1/2 minutesleft in the third quarter. Antetokounmpo and Kyle Korver hit late 3s to take a 90-89 lead into the fourth quarter.

AP

Houston Rockets' Russell Westbrook goes up for a shot against the Milwaukee Bucks during an NBA game Sunday, Aug. 2, 2020, in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

Spurs 108, Grizzlies 106

DeMar DeRozan made two free throws with a second to play, giving San Antonio a victory over Memphis that moved the Spurs into ninth place in the Western Conference.

The Spurs built an 11-point lead in the fourth quarter, then needed a bunch of big plays down the stretch from DeRozan after the Grizzlies rallied.

The final one came when he brought the ball down court after Jaren Jackson Jr. tied it for Memphis with a corner 3-pointer with 10.6 seconds to play. DeRozan pump-faked Dillon Brooks into the air and drew the foul, then knocked down the foul shots. Jackson missed a long 3 on the final possession.

The Spurs are trying to qualify for the postseason for what would be an NBA-record 23rd consecutive season. They arrived at Walt Disney World in 12th place in the West, but after victories over Sacramento and Memphis are just two games behind the eighth-place Grizzlies.

Dejounte Murray had 21 points and 10 rebounds for the Spurs. Derrick White added 16 points and DeRozan had 14. Morant finished with 25 points, nine rebounds and nine assists. Jackson scored 21 points.

Suns 117, Mavericks 115

Devin Booker scored 30 points and the Phoenix Suns erased a double-digit deficit while their All-Star guard was on the bench with foul trouble, rallying for a victory over the Dallas Mavericks.

The Suns have won both games in the restart after coming in with the worst record in the Western Conference. They're still long shots for the playoffs, while the Mavericks clinched their first postseason berth since 2016 by virtue of Memphis' loss to San Antonio earlier in the day.

Luka Doncic had 40 points, 11 assists and eight rebounds for the Mavericks, whose hopes of moving up from the seventh seed are fading with an 0-2 start in the eight-game seeding round.

Booked fouled out with 1:26 remaining, and the Mavericks pulled within two on a layup from Doncic. The Phoenix lead was still two in the final seconds when Kristaps Porzingis, who scored 30, barely grazed the front of the rim on a 3.

Dallas got another chance when a possession call was overturned on review with 3.3 seconds to go, but Tim Hardaway Jr.'s 3 was off the mark, leaving the Mavericks 1 of 18 from long range in the second half.

Booker had just committed his fifth foul moments after Deandre Ayton did the same earlier in the fourth quarter when Seth Curry's layup put Dallas ahead 81-70. But Jevon Carter and Cameron Johnson, who had 19 points and 12 rebounds, hit consecutive 3-pointers to spark the Phoenix comeback.

Magic 132, Kings 116

Nikola Vucevic had 23 points and 11 rebounds, Aaron Gordon scored 19 of his 22 points in the first half and Orlando continued its strong restart with a victory over Sacramento.

Terrence Ross added 25 points to help the Magic win a season-best fifth straight game going back to before the pandemic-forced shutdown in March.Orlando won the last three before the hiatus and beat Brooklyn, the team it is battling for the seventh seed in the Eastern Conference, to open the restart.

De'Aaron Fox scored 13 points after a career-high 39 in the restart opener for the Kings, who have lost both games in the bubble as they try to get in position for a shot at the final playoff spot in the West. Harry Giles III led Sacramento with a career-high 23 points.

Nets 118, Wizards 110

Caris LeVert scored 14 of his 34 points in the final seven minutes to help Brooklyn beat Washington.

Joe Harris scored a season-high 27 points and Jarret Allen added 22 points and 15 rebounds for the Nets. They rebounded from a loss to Orlando in their first seeding game to move seven games ahead of ninth-place Washington in the Eastern Conference standings.

Thomas Bryant had a career-high 30 points and 13 rebounds, and Troy Brown Jr. added 22 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists for the Wizards.

Celtics 128, Trail Blazers 124

Jayson Tatum scored 34 points, Jaylen Brown added 30 and Bostons built a big early lead before holding off Portland.

Tatum, who added a career-high eight assists, rebounded from a terrible performance in a loss to Milwaukee on Friday when he scored just five points on 2-of-18 shooting.

Damian Lillard had 30 points and 16 assists for Portland. Jusuf Nurkic added 30 points in his second official game back after breaking his leg in March 2019.

Infantino should remain FIFA president during probe

LONDON (AP)—Gianni Infantino can remain FIFA president and should not be forced from power while under criminal investigation, world football's governing body told The Associated Press on Saturday.

Swiss special prosecutor Stefan Keller opened a criminal case into Infantino's conduct on Thursday over his meetings with the country's attorney general who has been leading a sprawling investigation into football corruption.

"There is nothing preventing the president from performing his duties," FIFA said in a statement to the AP. "He will continue to fully assume his functions within FIFA."

The FIFA ethics committee faced calls to suspend Infantino from his predecessor, Sepp Blatter, who was toppled in disgrace in 2015 and banned from world football until 2021.

"The FIFA president is subject to a criminal investigation by the Swiss judicial authorities," FIFA said, "but he has not been charged nor is he guilty of anything. ... FIFA and its president will continue to cooperate fully with the judicial authorities in Switzerland until these investigations are concluded."

Swiss attorney general Michael Lauber has offered to resign over the case that centers on three meetings he had with Infantino in recent years—including one that he hadn't disclosed and claimed no memory of.

"FIFA is convinced that at the end of the current investigations it will be confirmed that the FIFA president didn't do anything wrong by performing his fiduciary duties and meeting the attorney general of Switzerland," FIFA said.

Infantino was elected president in the fallout from the investigations that erupted around FIFA in 2015.

Michel Platini, the favorite to succeed Blatter and then serving as UEFA president, was also suspended.

In the void, Infantino, who led the UEFA administration as general secretary, saw a route to leading FIFA. The Swiss-Italian was elected in 2016, beating Asian Football Confederation president Sheikh Salman.

The Bahraini is senior vice president of FIFA and would likely become interim leader if Infantino was suspended

Keller, a regional court judge, uncovered "elements that make up reprehensible behavior," an oversight panel monitoring federal prosecutors said in a statement. He opened a case against Infantino and regional prosecutor Rinaldo Arnold, a childhood friend of the FIFA boss, and sought authorization to open a case against Lauber.

Keller, who was named to the post of special prosecutor on June 29, found possible infractions included abuse of public office, breach of official secrecy, "assisting offenders" and "incitement to these acts," the panel said.

Kershaw sharp in return, Dodgers top D-backs

PHOENIX (AP)—Clayton Kershaw was stringing together dominant, scoreless innings. Cody Bellinger ripped a first-inning homer into the bullpen.

The Los Angeles Dodgers already looked formidable even before their superstars started contributing big moments. Now that all appears well with their veteran ace and cleanup hitter and with Mookie Betts delivering at the plate and in the field—the seven-time NL West champs seem even stronger in the 60-game sprint that's the 2020 season.

Kershaw threw 5 2/3 sharp innings in his season debut, Bellinger hit his first home run of the season and the Dodgers beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 3-0 on Sunday.

"It was fun, I missed it," Kershaw said. "It was hard to miss opening day and I didn't know how long it would take for my back to get better. It bounced back pretty quick, so I was just thankful to get out there today. Felt good, it was awesome."

Betts homered and doubled before leaving early because of a finger injury on his left hand. The Dodgers won three times in the four-game series, and have taken five of six overall.

Kershaw (1-0) gave up three hits, walked none and struck out six. The three-time Cy Young Award winner was supposed to make his ninth opening day start on July 23, but was scratched hours before the game because of a back injury suffered in the weight room.

AP

Los Angeles Dodgers starting pitcher Clayton Kershaw throws a pitch against the Arizona Diamondbacks during the first inning of a baseball game Sunday, Aug. 2, 2020, in Phoenix.

Yankees 9, Red Sox 7

In New York, Aaron Judge homered twice and drove in five runs, connecting for the fifth straight game and breaking an eighth-inning tie with a tape-measure shot that powered the New York Yankees past the Boston Red Sox.

Luke Voit also went deep in a back-and forth slugfest to help the Yankees (7-1) finish a three-game sweep in the first series this season between the longtime rivals. New York has won six in a row and 11 of 12 against Boston since last July.

Braves, Mets 0

In Atlanta, Kyle Wright and the Atlanta bullpen combined on a 10-hit shutout and the Braves won their fifth in a row, beating the Mets and blanking a New York lineup that found out late that slugger Yoenis Cespedes had opted out of playing any more this season.

The Mets released a statement from general manager Brodie Van Wagenen in the early innings that Cespedes wasn't at the ballpark and the team hadn't been able to contact him.

After the game, Van Wagenen said: "He's decided to opt out of the remainder of the season for COVID-related reasons."

A two-time All-Star, the 34-year-old Cespedes returned to the lineup this season for the first time since July 20, 2018, after a series of injuries.

Reds 4, Tigers 3, Game 1
Reds 4, Tigers 0, Game 2

In Detroit, Trevor Bauer struck out seven in a two-hitter, giving the Reds a sweep of Major League Baseball's first seven-inning doubleheader.

Shogo Akiyama hit an RBI single in the top of the seventh that sent the Reds to the victory in the opener.

MLB recently decided to use doubleheaders of seven-inning games, which have been commonplace in the minor leagues and colleges, to help teams alleviate an expected crush of twinbills caused by weather and coronavirus-related postponements.

Astros 6, Angels 5, 11 innings

In California, Alex Bregman hit an RBI single in the 11th inning, helping Houston rally for the win.

Bregman also homered, and Josh Reddick delivered the tying RBI single in the ninth as the Astros took two of three at Angel Stadium. Blake Taylor (1-0) retired Brian Goodwin on a soft fly to center with the bases loaded to end it.

Cubs 2, Pirates 1, 11 innings

In Chicago, Javier Baez singled through a drawn-in infield in the 11th inning, scoring David Bote from third base and giving the Cubs the win.

Bote, who made the last out in the 10th, started the inning on second base as mandated by Major League Baseball's extra-inning rule for the pandemic-shortened season. He advanced to third on a deep fly to right by Anthony Rizzo and jogged home on Baez's first career game-ending hit against Cody Ponce (0-1).

Orioles 5, Rays 1

In Baltimore, Hanser Alberto doubled in the tiebreaking run in the seventh inning, Renato Nunez and Pat Valaika homered, and Baltimore beat Tampa Bay to complete a three-game sweep.

After the final out, the Orioles celebrated (with proper social distancing) their first series sweep since Aug. 27-29, 2018, against Toronto, and first against Tampa Bay since 2016.

White Sox 9, Royals 2

In Kansas City, White Sox prospect Nick Madrigal had the first four hits of his promising big league career, including two during a seven-run seventh inning, and Chicago finished a three-game sweep.

Yasmani Grandal added three RBI for the White Sox in support of right-hander Dylan Cease (1-1), who gave up a homer to Alex Gordon in the third inning but otherwise steered clear of trouble.

Twins 3, Indians 1

In Minneapolis, Mitch Garver hit his first home run of the season and Minnesota used its bullpen to string together a two-hitter, taking the four-game series from its primary division competitor.

Max Kepler doubled and scored in each of his first two at-bats, and Jorge Polanco and Nelson Cruz drove him in with singles in the first and third. Garver, who had a career-high 31 homers in 2019, went deep in the second as the Twins built a 3-0 lead against Aaron Civale (1-1).

Rockies 9, Padres 6

In Denver, Antonio Senzatela pitched six innings of one-run ball for Colorado, and designated hitter Matt Kemp homered for a second straight game.

The Rockies moved to 6-2, which is tied for the team's second-best start in franchise history. They began 7-1 in 1995.

Senzatela (2-0) struck out six to help the Rockies take two of three from the Padres.

Rangers 9, Giants 5

In San Francisco, Joey Gallo hit a three-run homer in the seventh inning, helping the Rangers avoid a three-game sweep.

Shin-Soo Choo also went deep for Texas. Scott Heineman had a pair of hits, including a two-run double, and Jeff Mathis added an RBI single.

Athletics 3, Mariners 2

In Seattle, Ramon Laureano broke out of a slump with a three-run homer, and Chris Bassitt became the first Oakland starter to earn a victory this season.

Laureano's two-out drive in the fifth snapped a string of 23 1/3 innings by Mariners starters without allowing an earned run and helped the A's win their second game in a row after a three-game losing streak.

Thomas holds off Koepka to win WGC

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Justin Thomas wants to make his second stint as No. 1 in the world last longer than the first time around.

''I hope so,'' Thomas said Sunday after winning the FedEx St. Jude Invitational to take the No. 1 spot for the first time since June 2018. ''I feel like I'm a better player, and I feel like I'm more complete of a golfer now than I was then.''

Thomas dueled defending champion Brooks Koepka down the final holes, sealing the World Golf Championship victory on the par-5 16th. Thomas took the lead for good with his second straight birdie, while Koepka bogeyed the hole.

Koepka pulled within a stroke with a 39-footer for birdie on No. 17. But Koepka put his tee shot into the water along the 18th fairway on his way to double bogey, allowing Thomas to finish up an easy par putt for what wound up a three-stroke victory.

Thomas closed with a 5-under 66 to finish at 13-under 267 and take the $10.5 million winner's check for his 13th PGA Tour title. At 27, he became the third-youngest player since 1960 to reach 13 PGA Tour wins, trailing only Tiger Woods and Jack Nicklaus.

''I've been fortunate to have a good career so far, but I plan on playing out here for a long time and have a lot of things that I still want to accomplish,'' Thomas said. ''And every milestone and steppingstone are hopefully something that I can learn from and something that will help me even more in the long run.''

Daly, Singh pull out at TPC

John Daly and Vijay Singh were the latest players to withdraw from the PGA Championship next week at TPC Harding Park, making 12 players either exempt or offered invitations who have chosen not to play.

Daly, the surprise winner in 1991 at Crooked Stick when he began the week as the ninth, cited health concerns to the PGA of America. Singh, a two-time PGA champion at Sahalee in 1998 and Whistling Straits in 2004, cited an injury.

That makes five major champions who have withdrawn with Padraig Harrington, Y.E. Yang and Francesco Molinari pulling out early.

The PGA Championship, which starts Thursday, will be held without spectators for the first time because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is the first major of the year, to be followed by the U.S. Open at Winged Foot in September and the Masters in November, two weeks before Thanksgiving.

The PGA Championship has the strongest field of the four majors as it tries to get the Top 100 in the world. It will have no more than 93 of the Top 100 going into the week.

NFL teams worried of opt out policy

AP
New England Patriots linebacker Dont'a Hightower (54) is among the NFL players who opted out of the 2020 season because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

NEW YORK—The NFL is reportedly concerned with players taking advantage of the opt out policy.

As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, players have the ability to opt out of the 2020 season. Players who opt out will receive $350,000 if the league determines that player is high risk for the virus. Other players will make $150,000 if they opt out. A number of NFL players, including Dont'a Hightower and C.J. Mosley, have already exercised that right.

The league reportedly fears players who will be cut will opt out of the season so they can receive a stipend, according to Florio. The league is also fearful agents are using the opt out as a way to secure better contracts for their clients.

The deadline for players to opt out was supposed to be seven days after the altered CBA was ratified, but that still hasn't been done yet. ESPN's Adam Schefter reports the opt out date will be moved to Wednesday.

Players who fear getting cut could opt out in an attempt to secure a salary, but that strategy comes with a significant caveat. Players who opt out but don't make the team next season will reportedly have to pay that stipend back, making it unlikely that the strategy works. NFL teams reportedly don't want to chase down players for that stipend, but if the Detroit Lions showed us anything with both Barry Sanders and Calvin Johnson, NFL teams might ask any players to pay them back.

Agents using the opt out clause as leverage is certainly a concern for teams, though not much different than holdouts or other contract-related issues teams face every offseason. If agents threaten their clients will sit out unless offered a new contract, NFL teams know how to handle that situation.

At least one NFL player disagrees with the league's tactics. New England Patriots defensive back Devin McCourty said it's "an absolute joke" the league is trying to move the opt out date.

"I think it's an absolute joke NFL is changing the opt out period mainly because they don't want to see guys continue to opt out. I'm sure they are shocked about how many guys have opted out, but it's the same thing when we sign the CBA. Sometimes, some rules things that we think are good, sometimes backfire. We have rookies who are locked in long-term contracts and tagged and tagged. You guys don't think that we would love to change that? ... That's the point of signing an agreement," McCourty said.

"I think it's terrible. I think it's BS that the league changed that date, because you guys know Monday will be our first day in the building. So to try to act like guys are making a decision about something other than virtual meetings is a joke. But I think it's something that we go through as players. When players understand how much power we have, we see things change for us."

Meeanwhile, the number of New England Patriots who have decided to sit out the season because of concerns over the coronavirus continues to grow.

On Sunday, receiver Marqise Lee and tight end Matt LaCosse joined a list of six other Patriots players who have already declared their intentions to sit out this season.

Lee signed a one-year deal in April coming off two injury-filled seasons in Jacksonville. LaCosse is entering his second season in New England.

Hightower, safety Patrick Chung, tackles Marcus Cannon and Najee Toran, running back Brandon Bolden and fullback Danny Vitale previously opted out.

Eagles coach tests positive

Philadelphia Eagles coach Doug Pederson has tested positive for COVID-19.

The Eagles released a statement Sunday night saying Pederson hasn't experienced any symptoms, is feeling well and under self-quarantine. The team also said any person who was in close contact with Pederson has been notified and will be tested daily.

Per NFL protocols, Pederson can return to the team's practice facility after waiting 10 days since his first positive test if he remains asymptomatic or at least five days if he has consecutive negative tests at least 24 hours apart during that five-day span.

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series of try-outs to form the JNA Batch 2020-2021. JNA is one of NMIFA's grassroots programs and aims at preparing young players (in the 10 to 12 age group) for higher-level competitions and national team training system.

The try-outs will kick off on Aug. 8 from 8am to 9:30am at the NMISTC, while the next two sessions are scheduled for Aug. 15 and 22, from 8am to 9:15am. The last trial will be held on Aug. 29 from 8am to 9:30am.

From the new JNA players and the current 19 pool members, JNA will select the best 24 individuals to form the Junior National Academy Batch 2020-2021. They will then have 12 training sessions from Sept. 8 to Dec. 1 at the TSL Sports Complex. Trainings will take place every Tuesday for two hours each session. Interested players are required to undergo COVID-19 test and submit their negative results before they will be allowed to join the trials.

Meanwhile, players born in 2007 and have been enrolled in JNA will participate in the tryouts for the CNMI Boys U14 National Team in September. Schedule will be announced later.

NMIFA is moving ahead with some of its programs to get ready for future tournaments and keep its players active and in shape. Health and safety protocols set by both government authorities and NMIFA are strictly being followed by players, coaches, and staff.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
A Southern United player, left, dribbles in front of an MP United defender during their U10 game in last year's NMIFA Fall Youth League. The Northern Mariana Islands Football Association's Junior National Academy will hold a series of try-outs for players in the 10 to 12 group to select new JNA members.

NMA

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jor championship—we must ensure that we provide an atmosphere that focuses on athletes' experience. It must be well-planned and executed to encourage our athletes and fans to continue participating in our sport," the NMA official added.

Meanwhile, World Athletics president Lord Sebastian Coe recognized the need for an innovative way to present athletics to fans, based on an early research commission by the world-sanctioning body of the sport.

Coe, according to the report posted at the AFI Media, said that the research showed that 75% of fans wanted a change and a three-quarters of those specified change around the event presentation in stadiums and television and on other screens that they engage.

"It made me realize that it is probably more important now than has even been to deliver young fans quality information in a consumable way, whether they are on hay bales at the side of the grass track or whether they're sitting in an international stadium. The speed with which you can convey that information and bring humor occasionally are pieces great of human interactivity," Lord Coe was quoted as saying in AFI Media.

"If the experiences we provide them is anything less that they expect, they move on very quickly. Not just to another sport but also out of sport, to music, films and other things," he added.

The "Announcers and Event Presentation Managers in Modern Era" seminar was the third event that NMA attended virtually in the last two months. In June, the association also took part in the info session on risk management of sports events amid this pandemic and the OAA Annual Congress.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Northern Marianas Athletics coach Lia Rangamar demonstrates to students the proper way of doing the javelin throw before kicking off the qualifying tournament for last year's All Schools meet at the Oleai Sports Complex.

Westbrook powers Rockets past Bucks

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Kershaw sharp in return, Dodgers top D-backs

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Jr. players get back to the grind

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MP United Football Club's Mosh Sikkel, left, seen here taking a shot against two Shirley's Football Club defenders during last year's NMIFA Youth Spring League, is one of the members of the Junior National Academy.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Junior National Academy head coach Jersh Angeles watches players perform drills at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Kobleville last week.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The current members of the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association's Junior National Academy returned to practice last week and will face a unique training session setup in the next few months.

Sixteen from the 19-player pool got back to work at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville, according to JNA head coach Jersh Angeles and though they also had online training sessions earlier, the youth players still showed signs of rust from a long break due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Even with the once-a-week JNA online training, most of the players obviously got tired fast on the field, while some of the players maintained their fitness and ball touches during the break. Our first session was mostly ball touches/feeling, dribbling, and passing. I considered their fitness and the hot weather, I made it light and easy for all the players," Angeles said.

The JNA head coach acknowledged that it will take time before the pool members regain their top form, especially at this time when their training sessions have restrictions because of the pandemic.

"One of the biggest challenges is how the players will recover from the break and how they can adjust with the 'new normal' situations on the and off the field," Angeles said.

Meanwhile, the current JNA players will welcome new members next month, as the academy is opening a

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NMA attends another virtual seminar

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Learning never stops for Northern Marianas Athletics even at this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, as it participated in an online seminar dubbed as "Announcers and Event Presentation Managers in Modern Era."

NMA secretary general Robin Sapong, who attended the event that took place last July 30 and 31, said the seminar is aimed at giving the sport an opportunity to engage more its stakeholders, particularly the athletes and spectators. Over 1,500 announcers and event presentation managers from 43 countries attended the course conducted by Athletics Federation of India and supported by South Asian Athletics Federation, Oceania Athletics Association, and European Athletics.

"It's a great and unique initiative in this current situation. The lecturers are all world-class announcer and event managers. They gave as insights on how to attract the new generation of fans," said Sapong, who also addressed the participants as president of the OAA.

Geoff Wightman—the announcer for the athletics competitions at the 2012 London Olympics—and athletics competition director for 2020 Tokyo Olympics Chris Cohen were the keynote speakers during the seminar and shared the tools of their trade to the participants. Pierce O'Callaghan, project director for World Athletics and AFI Technical Committee chair Stanley Jones moderated the sessions.

"The take away for me is no matter what events we are organizing—whether we are running a grassroots level competition to a ma-

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

In this file photo, spectators watch as the CNMI's Jerald Castillo, center, leads the 100m race during the 2016 Micronesian Athletics Championships in Pohnpei.